

A RELATIONAL LOOK AT YOUR *OIKOS*:
A CURRICULUM FOR DISCIPLING
THE MATURE ADULT

Karl D. Miller, D.Min.

B.A., National-Louis University, 2001
M.A.R., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2004

Mentors

William H. Curtis, D.Min.
Lance D. Watson, M.Div.

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Karl D. Miller

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William H. Curtis, D.Min.

Lance D. Watson, M.Div.

Date: _____

Approved:

Mentor(s)

Dean, Doctoral Studies

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ABSTRACT

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This project provides a relational look at an individual's sphere of influence and will design a curriculum for discipling the mature adult. The intent of this course of action is to strengthen the entire church community. The context of the project is the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois. Five lessons were developed to reacquaint the class participants with the discipleship process. The project ran successfully, but required revisions. Pre and post evaluations were performed to measure attitudinal changes. The researcher believes this fellowship provides the perfect dynamic to train mature members thus equipping them to disciple their *oikos*.

INTRODUCTION

As far back as the writer of this project can remember, he has been in the church. Joining the Antioch Missionary Baptist at an early age has been permanently etched in his memory. This has been the church of his childhood, the church of his youth, the church where he was married as a young adult; and now the church where he minister's as middle age slowly slips from his grasp. The objective of this project was to develop a "Curriculum for Discipling the Mature Adult."

Currently, there is no organized "Discipleship Program" at the Antioch M. B. Church in Chicago, Illinois. In Chapter One, he presents a review of the current program and ministry structure of Antioch. He also explains how he fits into the paradigm of this ministry. The information comes from the writers' membership and ministry involvement at this church for over forty years. Chapter Two reviewed and presented pertinent statistics regarding the "Mature Adult" and provided the definition and resources that will be utilized along with the rationale for the development of this curriculum.

The third chapter of this project provides the foundations on which this "Discipleship" model has been built. It provides biblical, historical, and theological foundations. Chapter Four discusses the learning styles of mature adults and explores the various methods that were used in the development of the curriculum. In the fifth chapter, a review of the data collected was analyzed and presented in a narrative format.

Chapter Six provides the reflection, summary and conclusion of the project as well as ideas and insights learned from the project research and application.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

As long as the writer can remember he has been in the church. Joining the Antioch Missionary Baptist at an early age has been permanently etched in his memory. This has been the church of his childhood, the church of his youth, the church where he was married as a young adult; and now the church where he has the privilege to serve as an associate minister as middle age slowly slips from his grasp. The church slogan will always hold a special place in his memory, “The way of love is the Antioch way.” The late Rev. Dr. W.N. Daniel developed that slogan and his genuine loving spirit and heartfelt dedication to the pastoral ministry has been a trait that this minister has chosen to emulate.

Ministry Path

Discipling mature believers at the Antioch M. B. Church is just a natural progression in his spiritual journey from membership to discipleship while being a vital part of this church for over forty years. In the context of this project, a mature believer is defined as a person over the age of fifty and the definition of discipling is the ability to teach or the train another person. Jesus is our model, he intentionally help people grow in

all areas of their lives (not just spiritually), he developed committed relationships. This ministry focus is significant due to the substantial number of senior members who likely hold the position as patriarch or matriarch in their respective families. Being a leader in their families coupled with appropriate Biblical and discipleship training could provide a major impact for the Kingdom of God. Discipleship training may also ensure that family members are assured of their eternal relationship with God made possible by Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Significance

Antioch has provided the researcher with some significant foundational aspects in his spiritual journey. He has also benefited from influences outside of Antioch during some important moments of growth and reality on his road to spiritual maturity.

Growing up in Chicago, Illinois, Antioch was the only church the writer knew and respected. The family tradition of membership at Antioch began when his paternal grandmother, Grandma Willie, introduced the family to Rev. Daniel's powerful sermons and convincing demonstrations. The author accepted Christ at the age of six in the Junior Church of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church. The Rev. Robert A. Wells, Sr. shared with him the plan of salvation and he wanted to become a part of God's family. Rev. Wells made it sound so simple and inviting, this writer felt that he needed to be a part of this wonderful family; a family where he could receive eternal life. He often wondered if he knew what he was doing at the time. He remembers his Grandmother explaining to him what happened when he joined. He had never seen her so serious. She emphasized how his life would be different now that he was a Christian, which made him realize that being a Christian was a serious commitment.

The writer's formative years at Antioch were what he considered typical. He was a member of the Sunday School department, the Cub and Boy Scouts, Usher Board, Choir, Young Peoples Auxiliary as well as district and state organizations. It was in these groups that he received spiritual knowledge from Bible lessons and Bible study. He received training in the Baptist doctrine, the Church covenant, parliamentary procedures, and sex education. Participating in the Boy Scouts was where he learned how to be prepared, and in his formative years, Antioch teachers taught him how to prepare for life. Deacon Albert Otis, one of his junior department Sunday School teachers gave the students a quarter if they could recite the books of the Bible. It was motivating, encouraging, and financial rewarding; to this day the writer recites the books of the Bible with the rhythmic beat he learned as a child many years ago.

The people who mattered most in his youthful years were three wonderful, spirit-filled, Christian women who took him under their wings to mold and shape him into the Godly man that he is today: Mrs. Josephine Randolph, Mrs. Pinkie Kennedy and Mrs. Vivian Robinson were his personal angels sent from God. It was with them that he learned to travel--they went all over the United States--and even gave him his first leather passport holder when he won a trip to Africa by being a community volunteer. Each of these women had a gift uniquely assigned to them by God.

Mrs. Randolph was the natural leader and organizer; she knew how to get things done. She was respected by everyone she came in contact with, especially the pastor and church leaders. Mrs. Kennedy was the entrepreneur. She had a thriving flower business and taught this writer Christian etiquette and how to act in public. She emphasized the significance of volunteering and helping others. Often times she would have classes at

her house. She taught the youth how to eat in a restaurant and what fork to use when there were three on the table. Mrs. Kennedy had a heart of compassion and full of love. Mrs. Robinson was the Bible teacher; if she did not know it, it was not in the Bible. She was blessed with a teaching ability out of this world. These women molded, shaped, and formed him into the man he is today.

Every major accomplishment he achieved was marked by their presence. When he received a promotion on his job, they were among the first to know. They were an integral and significant part of his spiritual journey. He is still active in State, Regional and National organizations today because of them. These mature ladies were instrumental in planting the initial seed of discipleship within him. It was not until later in his life that he understood this yearning desire to disciple others; their legacy of our Lord and Savior lives on through him. Often times, when he is faced with a dilemma in youth ministry, he asked himself the question; what would Mrs. Randolph or Mrs. Kennedy do? He thanks the Lord for putting these godly women in his life.

Additionally, in the writer's teen years, Mrs. Ruby Amos the Sunday School superintendent for the intermediate department was instrumental in guiding him into music ministry. Through her encouragement, he began directing the department hymns during devotional periods in Sunday School and eventually became the director of the youth choir. Along with musical skills, he also developed skills in listening, counseling, encouraging, and suggesting Biblical solutions to problems. This early position of leadership forced him to study God's Word so that he might be able to provide insight from the Word to choir members and their families. He had some good years as a choir director, which was his first taste of true leadership. It was probably then that he realized

leadership can be as demanding as it is intoxicating. It was during the years of directing the Antioch Inspirational Choir that he began to develop a closer relationship with God.

Answering the Call

The author's great uncle died in California; he and his twin sister attended the funeral. They always said to each other, if their father was alive he would have gone. So they went. This was the first time that they had traveled together in quite a while. They had a chance to spend some quality time with each other. On the trip to Los Angeles they were bumped up to first class, which was a treat for both of them. During the return flight, they had to stop in Las Vegas. What the writer remembered most about the trip was that he met a young man who sat next to him who was a minister. He asked the writer if he was a preacher, the writer told him no--he was just a deacon. The flight to Las Vegas from Los Angeles is usually about a half hour, but the flight was delayed due to a minor malfunction. The young man and this writer talked for an hour and a half. The passenger shared how he had run from God but eventually surrendered. He stated this was not a chance meeting but God-ordained. To say the least the writer was flabbergasted; he did not know what brought that on. However, he was content with his place in ministry. When the young man disembarked in Las Vegas, the writer was stunned and curiously wondering what brought that on.

Shortly after this meeting, the Lord began to wake this writer up in the middle of the night. He usually slept like a rock. He would say goodnight and be asleep before his head hit the pillow. He did no worry much about anything so when he kept waking up, he was really puzzled as to what was happening. It never failed, every morning about 4 a.m.

he would be wide-awake. Finally, he began to question God as to what was going on; however; he was not receiving any answers. He began to use that time as devotion and quiet time with God.

The Vision

One night this writer had the strangest dream; he was in a church service and having a good time. The choir was singing, people were fellowshiping and having high praise. When he woke up, he remembered every detail; however he could not see who was preaching. This was strange because he usually did not remember dreams--at least not the specific details. The next night he had the same dream; however, this time as the camera in his mind panned the audience the congregation looked familiar. He recognized people. It appeared that things began to move in slow motion, and everything was in vivid color. When the camera showed the pulpit, to his surprise he was preaching. He could not believe it and woke straight up. He immediately went to the bathroom and started praying. He knew that he had received the call from God. He started trying to make a deal with God. He was trying to talk his way out of becoming a preacher.

The author told the Lord that he was not even a good public speaker; The Lord's response was "I will give you what you need." He tried reasoning with the Lord, by explaining that he was not even a Bible scholar, and God's response was "I will give you what you need." He told the Lord that his life was raggedy, real raggedy; the Lord said "I will give you what you need." For every excuse the author, raised the Lord gave the same answer, "I will give you what you need." He tried to tell God things about himself that he thought his Heavenly Father did not know; however, he was just fooling himself. God knew all about him. He knew him better than he knew himself; he just did not realize it at

the time. Panic stricken was the feeling that the writer had. He did not quite know what to do. So he just tried to act like nothing had happened, but things were just not the same. He had a fire going on in the inside of him and he needed to get it out.

Confirmation

One Sunday afternoon, after worship service the writer was still at the church working on some Academy business and he met Rev. Wells, the Sunday School superintendent and the minister who had shared with him the plan of salvation in his youth. Both of them being at the Church during that time of the day was quite unusual because Rev. Wells was not usually there after service. He was usually on the streets evangelizing even at seventy-six years of age. This was something that he has done every Sunday as long as the writer can remember. For this writer, Sunday afternoon after Sunday school, morning worship, and some type of ministry meeting he would go home for some rest and relaxation. However, at that chance meeting, the writer told Rev. Wells about the dreams. Almost immediately, in typical Rev. Well's fashion, he said "open your Bible and turn to Num. 12: 6. What does it say?" It read "I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream."

The writer had finally received spiritual confirmation of his calling. He was both scared and excited at the same time. This meeting brought him some peace. It made some sense of what had been happening in his life. He recalled mentioning to Rev. Wells what a chance meeting this was and how relieved he was to talk with someone. Rev. said, "Son this was not chance, it was God." The author simply replied, "Yes sir."

Just a few months ago Rev. Wells made his transition. Even while confined to a rehabilitation center at the age of ninety-two, he was a true discipler. The author would talk with him on a weekly basis during his confinement and visited him monthly: Rev. Well's zeal for evangelism was as focused as it was fifteen years ago when they had that discussion regarding this writer's call to ministry. Rev. Wells even shared stories from of his evangelistic exploits fifty years earlier which are legendary in the memories of the Antioch faithful. This mature adult and authentic disciple of Jesus Christ had a significant impact on the writer's ministry.

Youthful Beginnings

Young in Ministry

During this period this writer collaborated with a group of youth workers to develop an alternative worship service for the Antioch youth. Although Antioch offered children an alternative to adult worship, a huge gap existed with no real worship experience for teens. Many of the youth workers felt that they needed to address the teen's issues and interests in a way that that would be beneficial to their spiritual growth. Thus, Teen Church for youth ages thirteen to nineteen evolved. This was indeed challenging and hard work, but it was fun and a labor of love

After talking to Rev. Wells and starting the Teen Church, the writer decided to share his calling with a friend at work. She suggested that he talk with her pastor, Rev. Franklin D. Burns. He did not know Rev. Burns but was willing to talk with anyone who could further explain to him what was happening. They set up a meeting, and after

pleasantries, this writer began to tell him a little about what had happened to him. The pastor started asking him questions that provided him with additional clarity and he began the process of accepting this call on his life and preparing to become a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Burns and he started meeting on Saturdays along with a new minister from his church and another minister from the Gary, Indiana, area. He provided them with a couple of books on sermon preparation and they actually had chapters to review and homework each week. This was a wonderful introduction to the preaching ministry. They developed a close relationship and he considers him one of his fathers in the ministry even though he had only known him for just a short while. Pastor Burns provided insight, direction and instruction at a time when he really needed it. He is thankful to God for placing Pastor Burns in his life.

The writer received his call to the ministry in January of 1992 right before his fortieth birthday. Sometimes he wondered if his calling was a midlife crisis. Although his pastor never really talked to him about his call, on the first Sunday in April Pastor Daniel announced to the congregation that he would be preaching his trial sermon on Wednesday, April the 21st. That week he met with Pastor Daniel to see to how he should prepare his sermon. The pastor said, "Just preach what the Lord gives you;" that is what he did. His trial sermon was "He'll give you what you need" the text was taken from Phil 4:19; "But my God will supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

That is exactly what the Lord had told him that January morning when he was making excuses. "I will give you what you need." At first, he had felt that Rev. Daniel

should have worked with him on his sermon preparation or structure. Later the writer recognized that God provided.

In the following months Rev. Burns provided him with several opportunities to preach during the Saturday classes. Pastor Burns did not change much of his trial sermon, because he said you have to preach what God has placed in his heart. When the writer now reflects back he understands that Rev. Daniel relayed that message. Three things Pastor Daniel told him the night he delivered his trial sermon: pray hard, study long, and live right. To this day he has tried to live by those words of instruction.

Learning to Talk the Talk

Two weeks later, Rev. Daniel appointed this writer to be the Minister-in-charge of the teen church. Beginning in June 1992, he was preaching every Sunday--an opportunity not afforded to many new preachers. He was up for the task but understandably fearful. He began to study everything he could get his hands on. He talked with several pastors and youth pastors around the city to get ideas on sermon series and topics. The styles he liked he tried to emulate. On Saturday evenings he would attend the services of the Rev. Jeremiah Wright at Trinity United Church of Christ. He loved Rev. Wright's style and ability to make the Biblical message relate to what was currently happening in the world.

One Saturday this writer approached Dr. Wright and explained that he was a young preacher that was looking for some direction and some relevant books to read. The writer remembers telling Pastor Wright that he was going to write him. The pastor quickly responded, "I'll write you back." He did respond to his letter with several recommended books and invited him to his Ministers-in-Training (MIT) class that Trinity

had for seminarians. He also inquired about his ability to go to Seminary. Pastor Wright suggested Virginia Union, but the writer knew he needed to be trained in the Chicago area to be near his family.

The Crawl before the Walk

One of his first hurdles was to complete his undergraduate degree. He had attempted to finish many times before, but always procrastinated by using the excuse that he was too busy helping others with their programs or projects. He convinced himself that he could always finish school later and justified that thought by reasoning that school was not really that important. Nevertheless, he registered for “visiting student classes” at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, at which he could begin without an undergraduate degree. Systematic Theology was his first class, and this instructor was destroying everything he had been taught and believed. He made it through the course bewildered realizing that he did not know much and he had a lot to learn.

Each semester, this writer took one or two courses. However, he dropped more classes than he completed because in the back of his mind he felt that he did not really belong in the seminary. He had filled his mind with reasons why that had to be true. Although Trinity had a program where he could finish the seminary degree and then complete his undergraduate degree, he decided to stay out a few semesters; those semesters turned into years.

Clearing Obstacles

He was still running a Christian school, preaching and teaching Sunday School every Sunday, while working a full time job that required him to be on call twenty-four hours a day. In addition, he had family responsibilities and a wife who did not want to be married to a preacher. Too much was going on, and he chose to put his education on the back burner. Yet he would always squirm and feel uncomfortable when Rev. Wright talked about preachers who had not been to any school to be trained. Through Pastor Wright's insistence, his scholarly, contemporary, and prophetic preaching, and his pastoral care, another seed of discipleship planted in the writer's life: He was convicted and convinced that he needed to become as academically *and* spiritually prepared as possible to preach and teach God's people.

A Change Has Come

In the last quarter of 1998, this writer realized things had to change in his life. He was in and out of bad relationships; the women he dated wanted to get married, but he knew in his heart they were not what God wanted for him. He fasted and prayed seeking direction for his life. He made a vow of celibacy and spent quiet time with God. It was just God and him. This time he slowed down enough to listen to the Holy Spirit and read God's word. He allowed the Spirit to speak to his heart. God was true to His promise He had made to him earlier, the writer just had to be still and let God guide him. He prayed for discipline, discernment and direction for his life.

The Lord knew what he wanted and needed. He needed a wife who loved God. A person who loved church, the Lord made him realized that he was a “church boy;” church is what he did and church was all he knew. Yes, he knew real estate and was successful in it; but church is where his heart was. He needed a woman who understood that, he sought a kindred spirit. He had become accustomed to going to churches, affairs, and programs all by himself. He sought to share his love for God and his love for people with a companion.

At beginning of 1999, this writer went on a forty day fast (fruits, vegetables, and water). He was making some of the same resolutions he had made in previous years, but he needed the Lord to work on him--change him, as the old folk used to say, “Purge him Jesus.” He was determined and with God’s help he knew it could be done. The Bible says, “He that finds a wife finds a good thing and receives favor from the Lord.” (Prov. 18:22) He wanted that promise of a wife and favor. God gave him what he needed, and he is eternally grateful.

This writer started noticing a woman with whom he had worked with in youth ministry for fifteen years. He had never really noticed her before. He just knew the Lord was mistaken because he did not like her like that. However, the Lord removed the scales from his eyes. They had a celibate courtship, fell in love and were married. They have now been married 7 years and he often wonders what would have happened if they had met twenty-five years ago, but God was true to His word. After they were married, he finally finished his undergraduate Masters and Doctorate in Ministry degrees.

Even in his sinful state, God did not remove him, but He pruned him and worked with him to make him into what He wanted him to be. He thanks God for His grace and

mercy while supplying his needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. He has something to share with His people, to God be the glory for the things He has done. God made sure that his life passed by and was influence by the mature disciples named Randolph, Kennedy and Robinson. He also placed a Daniel, Wells, Burns and Wright along his path that was receptive, capable and able to help direct and influence him on this life journey. They are the mature disciples who have planted the seeds of discipleship in his life.

Analyzing Ministry Context

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church

The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26). There are not many cities or towns you can go to in the United States and not find a Church named Antioch. As a child he thought there was only one Antioch; the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church located 415 West Englewood, at 63rd and Stewart streets in the Englewood community of Chicago, Illinois. As he became older, to his amazement he discovered that there was another Antioch Church located in the same community and over five Antioch churches in the Chicago area. This Antioch, the church of his youth had been in existence for over eighty-two years and has a rich history in the Baptist tradition.

Antioch is located in the Englewood community, and while some of its members live in the community; many other members live outside the immediate vicinity and drive up to twenty-five to thirty miles to come to church for worship, various meetings and

activities. For many reasons the Church is considered a “Commuter Church.” However, most if not all of the evangelism, outreach and community service occurs in the Englewood area.

With a membership of 2,200, this current congregation is composed of approximately 40% seniors, 30% middle age, 10% youth and young adults, and 20% children. The church’s Mission Statement has been implemented. Members are actively involved in the four E’s of the statement: “Evangelize, Educate, Equip and Empower.” Activities on a weekly to monthly basis support the mission. The Church resources (time, money and people) are totally involved in the mission of the Church.

Member engagement is performed through classes and participation in the various clubs, auxiliaries, and ministries. Antioch has Sunday school and BTU classes on a weekly basis. Additionally, the men of the church have Brotherhood meetings weekly that foster relationships and growth among the brothers. There are Mission groups that focus on the work of the Church in which the membership is comprised of mostly women. The Mission One and Mission Two core groups includes in excess of twenty-five different organizations. These groups select their leadership and engage volunteers to perform the work of the group, which in most cases is the work of the church.

Englewood Community

As mentioned previously, the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church is located in the Englewood community. This community is bounded by the Dan Ryan Expressway on the East, Damen Avenue on the west, 55th (Garfield Boulevard on the North), and 75th Street on the South.

Of the total population of 40,222 ¹ in Englewood, 99.3% are African American. People of Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic, Native American, and Pacific Islander ancestry also populate the neighborhood. Within this twenty block square radius there are approximately one hundred and fifty churches and numerous faith-based organizations, which represents a strong religious presence in the midst of many urban ills.

Churches in the Englewood community include two Assemblies of God, ninety-one Baptist, one Episcopal, one Christian Reformed, thirteen Church of God, two Lutheran, two Missionary Baptist, one Mennonite, three Nazarene, ten Pentecostal, two Presbyterian, ten Roman Catholic, five Spiritual, three Spiritualist, and three United Methodist.

“Englewood is considered one of the most dangerous communities in Chicago.”² There were 599 homicides in Chicago 2003 compared with 448 in 2004. In Englewood alone, there were fifty-six killings in 2003 vs. forty-six in 2004. ³ In 2005 even with a decrease in homicides to thirty-seven, ⁴ Englewood still leads Chicago’s seventy-seven communities in crime statistics.

The community has a total of 12,619 households of which 8,741 are families (meaning blood related in some way) and 3,878 are non-families. One-third of the total households 4,554 have children younger than eighteen years of age. There are 2,414

¹ Census 2000, City of Chicago, Community Area 68, Englewood.

² Chanel Polk and Mick Dumke “A Brief History of Englewood,” [article online]; *Chicago Reporter*, December 1999. available from <http://www.chicagoreporter.com/1999/12-99/1299timeline.htm>; Internet, accessed November 27, 2004.

³ Crime Index Summary – Chicago, Chicago Police Department, January-December 2003 and 2004, September 4, 2006.

⁴ Gun Guys, “Englewood Community Marches Against Gun Violence,” [article online]; available from <http://www.gunguys.com/?p=851>, March 20, 2006; Internet, accessed September 4, 2006.

couples representing the marital status of the community households, while there are 5,294 households that are headed by females with no husband present. More than half of the female-headed households 3,131 have children younger than eighteen years of age. There are 3,342 households with individuals that live alone and 1,442 of them are sixty-five years and older. Only 30% of the households live in owner-occupied units, with the remaining seventy percent living in renter-occupied units.⁵

The social characteristics as it relates to education is that of the population that are twenty-five years or older only fifty-nine percent are high school graduates or higher. The employment status covers those of the population that are sixteen years or older- 26,951, with only 12,432 of them in the labor force. The industries that employ these individuals consist of twenty-four percent in education, health and social services and ten percent are in retail trade. These figures concurrently impact the income of the over 12,000 households with the median income being \$19,304. Even with this income, nearly fifty percent of the families are below the poverty level. Aside from all the social ills that plague this community, residents have had to combat the drug trade that can be witnessed on several street corners and random gunfire that can be heard on any given day.

According to the *Chicago Reporter*, the average Chicagoan lives seventy-one and a half years, the racial gap is enormous: White women live to be nearly eighty; black men die at sixty. The differences by neighborhood are equally startling. The mostly white, middle-class residents on the city's Northwest Side can expect to live seventy-five to

⁵ Census 2000, City of Chicago, Community Area 68, Englewood.

eighty years. For the mostly poor African Americans on the South Side, the life expectancy is around sixty years. In Englewood the average is sixty-four years.⁶

Englewood High School is located directly across the street from the Antioch Church. It is one of four High Schools in the community. In addition, Walter Reed, an Elementary School is located within one block of the Church. New housing opportunities (single family homes, condominiums and apartment buildings) continue to be developed in close proximity designed for both homeowners and renters. While this community has been stagnate for some time, hope and opportunity still exist with the positive developments that are happening within this area.

These statistics and conditions seem to explain why the Englewood community presents an enormous opportunity for the Church to compel the lost to come to Christ and provide educational and social service opportunities for those in need.

In order to have a well-balanced ministry, churches should have a program in place to ensure that Discipling is the root of its focus. The programs should include: Evangelism, bring them in; Orientation, introduce them to the church structure and environment; New Members Training, familiarize them with basic Christian doctrine; and Discipleship Training, teach them how to live a Christian life and continually win others to Christ.

The revitalization of a community provides greater opportunities to attract new members of the faith. However, statistics show that the greatest impact that a Christian

⁶ "Life Expectancy Varies Across Chicago," [article online]; *Chicago Reporter*, April, 1999. available from <http://www.chicagoreporter.com/1999/04-99/0499healthextra2.htm>; Internet, accessed November 27, 2004.

can have is on their families and friends.⁷ This concept is strongly supported in the book, *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples*, by Win Arn and Charles Arn.

Currently, at the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, where the Rev. Gerald M. Dew is Pastor; teaching opportunities are available in the Sunday school and BTU departments. Additionally, there are Mission groups mainly for the females and Brotherhood groups for males. In the Christian Education structure, there is currently a void in the Ministry structure of an organized Discipleship program. This project provides a relational look at an individual's *oikos* (household, sphere of influence) and will design a curriculum for discipling the mature adult.

The writer is an associate minister at Antioch and this position affords him the opportunity to teach and preach on a regular basis. He has also been a Sunday school teacher for many years and also has assisted the pastor in leadership training classes. While there are several generations of family members at Antioch, the researcher is probably more closely connected to the second and third generations of this fellowship. While the pastor has instituted annual retreats and workshops; he has indicated that a discipleship program would be a welcomed addition for the church in the Christian Education department.

⁷ Win Arn and Charles Arn, *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples* 2d ed (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 49.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY PROJECT

Preaching

Preaching is the life blood of the church. Paul wrote in Romans “How shall they hear without a preacher.” (Rom.10:14) In the inaugural sermon of Jesus, (Lk. 4:16-21) He provides the model of how we are to present a prophetic word and become a prophetic proclaimer in this world in which we live. Jesus went back to His home town of Nazareth and went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. They gave Him a book from the prophetic tradition of Isaiah. Jesus read it and then preached. In reading that passage He outlined His prophetic mission. His message has been recorded in time memorable for us to study, learn and do.

Mentors Curtis and Watson state, “Prophetic preaching is manifested through sermon (homiletics), servant (leadership), and service (ministry).” Our goal as preachers is to preach with a prophetic hermeneutic to a contemporary audience. Our role then becomes theologian, interpreter and communicator . . . to elevate the preaching task beyond the exercise of professional duty to an experiential, participatory, connective and

deeply scriptural proclamation in this post millennial era.”⁸ This has been generously examined and discussed in our peer group sessions, readings and assignments. Critical exposure of the art of preaching in the peer sessions was invaluable. Information and wisdom shared could never be obtained in a traditional class room setting. The peer mentor interaction was a valued benefit and enjoyed by the writer during this UTS experience.

The student was enlightened by the concepts presented in the book *The Web of Preaching*. It was refreshing to read a scholarly work that put significant emphasis on the African American Tradition of Narrative Preaching. The inclusion of some of preacher/scholars that the student has great respect for and have been exposed too through the years made the Eslinger’s text very interesting and relevant.

The student found the book a brilliant concept that included various aspects of Biblical preaching. The book reflects on different styles of proclamation while also presented some new concepts that he was not familiar with. He really enjoyed chapter three, which dealt with Narrative Preaching in the African American Tradition. This is the style that he has been expose too most of his life and is the style that he seeks to model in his preachin footnotes g. It was not until reading this book that he finally understood why he enjoys some preachers more than others. Usually if the preacher does not follow the narrative preaching style, of which he has become accustomed, he has a difficult time following the preacher. While this book is not exhaustive in any way of the vast preaching genre, it does provide a contemporary perspective on the art of preaching.

⁸ William H. Curtis and Lance Watson, “Preaching Prophetically in a Postmodern Culture: Communicating with Contemporary Audiences” (Dayton, OH: UTS, 2004).

Paul Scott Wilson's concept in *The Four Pages of the Sermon* is a method that this student plans to give future study as he strives to learn more about this business of preaching. He was encouraged by the simplicity in which the author presented this concept. Page one, trouble and conflict in the Bible; as preachers we should consider the Bible in its own time. Page two; we are to look at similar sin or human brokenness in our time. Page three; returns to the Bible, this time to identify what God is doing in or behind the Biblical text as it provides the story of good news. Page four; points to God graciously at work in our world.⁹ I believe that through further study the student can utilize this method in sermon preparation to develop what Eslinger calls "the three elements of the sermon." These elements focus on the Biblical text, the theological task and in rhetorical skill.¹⁰

The presentation of Inductive and Narrative Homiletic Plots, contained an interesting note in that both Craddock and Lowry agree that the deductive method is seriously flawed. Craddock is considered the pioneer of the "new homiletics" and he says that the method is flawed because of its regular misuse of the text.¹¹ On the other hand, a careful listening to the text is a necessary aspect of the inductive approach. The chapter went on to explain that the inductive method yields a sermon whose form and movement is readily detectable to the hearer. According to the text an inductive sermon contains easy points for listener to identify.

⁹ Paul Scott Wilson, *The Four Pages of The Sermon: A Guide to Biblical Preaching*. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 16.

¹⁰ Richard L. Eslinger, *The Web of Preaching: New options in Homiletic Method*. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 208.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 47.

As the student read the chapter on the Narrative Center, he felt at home with the concept and understood that this model is used widely in the African American Churches. The narrative provides an opportunity to open up the message. He believes it could be referred to as Biblical story telling for the sake of the kingdom. In the narrative we have the voice of the story, in which Biblical narrators are knowledgeable and reliable. Also, through the drama of the Biblical narrative the preacher engages in a deeper level of communication with the congregation both through exposition of the text and detailed descriptions on the characters. These readings made an indelible impression on his ability to be one who heralds the Gospel of Jesus Christ Prophetically in this Postmodern Culture.

Discipleship

Jesus' choosing of disciples as recorded in the New Testament was not new to the world or the culture in which Jesus lived. The scripture records that John the Baptist had disciples in Jn. 1:35. Discipleship was a customary practice of Greek culture centuries before Christ appearance on earth.

Plato whom is called the "father of philosophy" was instrumental in the development of his disciple/student Aristotle who built gymnasiums to train others. In our culture gymnasiums are usually utilized to hold sporting events. However in the Greek world during this period they were training centers. It was Plato's "concept of thought" that dealt with issues of epistemology, or how we gain knowledge, and issues related to the meaning of life.

These training centers taught Plato's thought and the system developed by his disciple Aristotle, this concept is known as Aristotelian logic. This process of Discipling influenced the Greco-Roman world and was called "Hellenization." People who were not Greek began to embrace this concept in their thinking, culture and language. This is in essence the beginning of the discipleship concept. In the New Testament Jesus provided a spiritual component to this Greek concept as He taught and prepared His disciples for the work of the church.

While the genre of discipleship literature is extensive, both classical and contemporary offerings have been utilized to help frame the concept that was being developed in the creation of a "curriculum for mature adults." Robert E. Coleman is the author of *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. This book is a classic and has been utilized around the world for more than forty years. Many ministries have been started and countless individuals disciplined from the eight point plan presented in this book. Dr. Coleman utilizes Biblical support to emphasize the discipleship model as taught by Christ. While the title of this book would give one the impression that it is about evangelism, it provides specific details describing how the Master Teacher went about the business of training and developing disciples. Additionally, *Coleman's The Master Plan of Discipleship* which was to be considered a companion to his *Master Plan of Evangelism* book provides for readers the "Acts of the Church" which were carried out following the command that Jesus gave the disciples and that commence after He left the earth for glory.

The Master's Plan for Making Disciples by Win and Charles Arn provides solid Biblical foundational information and also explains in detail the "*oikos* concept" that is a

vital part of our lesson format. This concept helps us to understand that people have more influence in their “network of friends, family and associates” than any other means of interaction. Two texts were utilized by Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World and Early Christian Families in Context*. These books help to describe households and house churches while providing useful information on Archaeology and the Cultural Anthropology of this period.

Bill Hull’s contributions, *The Disciple Making Pastor and the Disciple Making Church* help us to learn from the Biblical foundation of discipleship and the early disciple’s model. While *Side by Side a Handbook, Disciple Making for a New Century* allowed us to peer into some of the great minds of our times to better understand.

Avery Cardinal Dulles classic *Models of the Church* which obviously was intended for the Catholic Church (but use through-out the universal church community) explores the basic church models that have arisen in history as a result of differing points of view.¹² Chapter eight was invaluable in providing Biblical Foundational support regarding Jesus and His disciples. *Disciples Are Made Not Born*, by Walter Henrichsen helped the writer to understand how to recruit and train disciples.

Another classic *The Cost of Discipleship* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer provides a memoir of this great Christian while helping believers understand the difference between cheap grace and costly grace. This book helps Christian’s to understand what it cost to truly be a disciple. Bonhoeffer says “When Christ calls a man, he bids him to come and die”¹³ While Bonhoeffer provided the writer with a classical view of the Lutheran

¹² Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church Expanded Edition* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2002), 181.

¹³ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1995), 10.

Church, Michael Foss provided a contemporary view of the Lutheran Church in His books, *Power Surge* and *Real Faith* he shares the six marks of discipleship for a changing church and how one “lives” those six marks. Some of the information obtain from these reading were incorporated into the lessons that were created for the mature adult.

It was important for this writer to utilize African History and African American History as a critical component in the development of this project. John Mbiti’s book: *African Religions and Philosophy* helped provide the connection with the African Continent. While explaining to us the scholarly contributions that were made by such notable theologians like: Tertullian, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Augustine. “African Christianity made a great contribution to Christendom through scholarship...”¹⁴ Many of the initial facts presented in Mbiti’s book were confirmed in several of the following books: *Troubling Biblical Waters* and *Stony the Road We Trod*, both edited by Cain Hope Felder. Two other books *Black Man’s Religion* and *Defending Black Faith* written by Craig S. Keener and Glenn Usry were also utilized in support of the above mentioned perspective. Additionally, in this category, the other two books considered were: *How African Religion Changed the American Church* by Willie F. Wilson and *Blow the Trumpet in Zion* which was edited by: Iva Carruthers, Frederick Haynes, III and Jeremiah Wright, Jr. Finally, *In Search of Wisdom* edited by Anne Wimberly, and Evelyn Parker provided wisdom and faith formation information in the Black Church.

In exploring the Theological aspect of Discipleship, *Introduction to Theology* by Thomas and Wondra was most helpful in framing the theological ideas regarding this subject. They assisted us in arriving at the appropriate place for Discipleship in the

¹⁴ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* 2d ed. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1989), 223.

Theological position of “Practical Theology.” Their initial concepts and theories were supported by Ladd’s *Theology of the New Testament* and Stone and Dukes *How to think Theologically*. To keep the Theological perspective centered as well as historical accurate, we also consulted Dwight Hopkins two books *Being Human Race, Culture and Religion* and *Down, Up and Over*.

The search for age specific information did not yield many results; however several books were read and reviewed to see if they could provide appropriate information to assist in the designing of an age appropriate curriculum for mature adults. These books were: *Forty-Sixty, A study for Midlife Adults Who Want to Make a Difference* by Richard Gentzler, Jr. and Craig Kennet Miller and *Designing an Older Adult Ministry* by Richard Gentzler Jr. These books help to identify the psyche of mature adults; but were more geared to Senior Citizens. David P. Gallagher’s *Senior Adult Ministry in the 21st Century* provided strategies for reaching people over fifty years of age help the writer to ascertain various learning styles and how mature people learn. One of the assigned text for this Doctoral Program; *Professional Development as Transformative Learning* by Patricia Cranton also helped to understand how one becomes a transformative learner. While reading the Cranton text, the researcher often substituted the adult learner with members of his congregation and the teacher with the pastor, minister. It was interesting to discover that much of our interest and knowledge about educational practice are practical and emancipatory in nature rather than technical.

Finally, Marlene Lefever has written an interesting book entitled *Learning Styles* reaching everyone God gave you to teach. This book identifies four types of learners and methods of how a teacher can incorporate the various styles in a lesson.

The above mentioned ministry models, perspectives, concepts and ideas have helped to shape the curriculum development for the mature adult.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Biblical Foundation

Four authors formed the initial search in developing the Biblical Foundation for discipleship. They are Charles Van Engen, Loren Mead, Paul Minear and Avery Dulles. The first author, Charles Van Engen wrote *God's Missionary People*. He referenced the Biblical letter to the Ephesians regarding Paul's expression of the "essence of the local church."¹ His is a "missionary ecclesiology"² that finds the church's mission in unity, in holiness and in its mission to all.³ Van Engen restates the missionary intention of the local church with concrete, contemporary expressions: being for the world, identification with the oppressed, mission, proclamation witness, and yearning for numerical growth.⁴ In the end, Van Engen sees throughout the New Testament and in the history of the

¹ Charles Van Engen, *God's Missionary People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), 62.

² *Ibid.*, 47.

³ *Ibid.*, chapter 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

church a highly complex system of inter-reacting metaphors and functions that describe the purpose of the church in relation to the world.¹⁹

A second author, Loren Mead, in his book *Transforming Congregations for the Future*, looks at three parabolic actions of Jesus: in Lk. 4:31-37, Jesus heals a demon-possessed man; in Mk. 8:19, He feeds the hungry people; and in Jn. 2:1-11, He creates the marriage wine.²⁰ Mead concludes that the story of Jesus leads us to become disciples and apostles carrying forth the kind of good news that Jesus modeled. Congregations should be about helping us all become disciples and apostles.²¹ In his final analysis he states, “The root of it all is the transformation of each of us into a disciple . . . into a special part of the apostolate”²² Mead then takes a critical step for those of us drafting a vision of discipleship in the twenty-first century congregation. He writes, “Having stood behind the window looking out into the world, now we step outside and look back through the same window. Now we focus on the inner life of the congregation itself.”²³ This stands as a reminder that the church’s largest purpose: “Mission that carries the good news outward.”²⁴ Yet discipleship is a necessary grounding for those who would be sent into the world or returning to their *oikos*.

A third scholar, Paul Minear, wrote *Images of the Church in the New Testament*. In it he finds at least ninety-six images of the church in the New Testament. He

¹⁹ Ibid., 128.

²⁰ Loren Mead, *Transforming Congregations for the Future* (New York, NY: The Alban Institute, 1994), 27-30.

²¹ Ibid., 41.

²² Ibid., 41-42.

²³ Ibid., 43.

²⁴ Paul S. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1960), 227.

distinguishes three constellations of these images: “images that gravitate around the conception of the church as the people of God; images that gravitate around the activity of God in creating a new humanity to which was attributed a genuinely cosmic beginning, vocation and destiny; images that gravitate around the conception of the church as a fellowship of saints and slaves whose life together is characterized by a unique kind of mutuality in gift and in vocation. The function of these images is to express the interdependence of men within this fellowship.”²⁵ He locates “the disciplined community,” “disciples,” and “followers” here.²⁶

Minear notes that all four Gospels record Jesus calling people to be his followers. He chose a small band of intimates while enjoying many friends and counting still more people among believers. Those who responded to his call to follow him were designated disciples, though it is obvious this is “an analogous term, admitting of various kinds and degrees, from Mary and Martha to Johanna and Susanna to Peter and James and John.”²⁷

Were this only pre-resurrection terminology we would be hard pressed to apply these terms to the post-ascension church. Yet early para-Gospel writings indicate that believers were called “disciples” and “followers” within the early church community. In the book of Acts both individual believers and the totality of believers were designated as disciples.²⁸ In the book of Revelation they are called followers (Rev. 14:4; 19:14). Also, Jesus’ Great Commission drives the eleven to “make disciples.” These references lead us to ask about the function of these words in describing the early church community.

²⁵ Ibid., 67.

²⁶ Ibid., 145-148.

²⁷ Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church Expanded Edition* (New York, NY: Image, 2002), 199-200.

²⁸ Ibid., 202.

Minear clarifies four functions of this image as it describes the church community. First, “Jesus associates loyalty to him as teacher with attitudes toward other disciples. This is defined as a basic social component of discipleship: to regard the least, whether or not he is naked, hungry, sick, or an outcast, as the Lord incognito.”²⁹ Second, Jesus is blunt on many occasions, laying down the requirements for discipleship. Minear lists a few: “take up the cross, lose one’s life for his sake, reduce to secondary status obligations to kinfolk, refuse to count the cost in advance.”³⁰ Third, “the true test of total allegiance to him is total obedience to the will of God, whose great command is love of neighbors,”³¹ Fourth, Jesus establishes a social structure unlike any others, in imitation of him. “You are all brothers.” (Mt. 23:8-9) No one shall count himself greater than another.

Avery Dulles provides a brilliant summary of how various New Testament books nuance the definition of discipleship. In *Models of the Church*, he finds that “Matthew gives special attention to initiation into the deeper significance of Jesus’ teaching. Luke accents the breaking of old ties and total attachment to the person of Jesus. John stresses election to membership in a community sharply opposed to the “world.” Paul emphasizes self-emptying love in imitation of Jesus. The letter to the Ephesians underscores assimilation to God. The Apocalypse celebrates the anticipated victory of those who “follow the Lamb” (Rev. 14:4). James calls for single-minded obedience to the law of God; and the first letter of Peter dwells on solidarity in suffering with the Lord Jesus.

²⁹ Minear, *Images of the Church*, 147.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

Combining these various emphases, the reader of the New Testament is challenged to construct a rich and multifaceted concept of discipleship.”³²

Three of the four scholars find that, clearly, the vision of the church as a community of disciples finds Biblical resonance. Minear draws broadly from the Bible in his assessment, emphasizing the Biblical expectations that the church be mission, that is for him, outward oriented, loyal to Jesus, and obedient within a new social structure. Van Engen and Dulles ground the vision in particular books of the New Testament (Ephesians and the gospels, primarily). While Dulles resonates with Minear’s sense that the call to discipleship is a call to a new community, Van Engen emphasis resonates more with Mead, who speaks in dichotomous terms: the church (and its disciples) carries the good news forth to a waiting world (going forth as apostles). This writer thinks both Van Engen and Dulles would find that “either/or” thinking (either the church is a band of disciples or a community of apostles) dangerous and I am grateful for their insistence to include both aspects of being followers of Jesus in their analyses.

It is instructive, too, that none of these authors use “membership” language in their search in the Bible. Instead, the church is described in language of discipleship, which is highly relational (*ubuntu*), both to Christ and to the community.

The twelve Old Testament historical books (Joshua through Esther) provide a connection between the Pentateuch and the remainder of Israel’s history. The book of Joshua provides insight as he takes God’s promised people from the wilderness to the Promised Land. Joshua declares to the nation “as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.” (Jos. 24:15) That profound statement provides a sedge way into the significance of “Israel’s God” and how in the book of Ruth, Ruth the Moabite desired to worship the

³² Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 203.

God of Israel which was part of God's providential plan that incorporates her into the ancestral bloodline of the Messiah. Early Christian tradition concerning the ancestry of Jesus names only four women (three of them non- Israelite): Mary, Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth (Mt. 1:5). Rabbinic tradition celebrates Ruth as the model proselyte.”³³

The story of Ruth provides a Biblical foundation for a relational and family connection. In this book God shows how He can use not only the people of Israel but the people of all our nations to work out His plan in the world. Ruth was not born into an Israelite family. She was born and lived in Moab, but left her own family to live in Israel with her mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth said, “Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. (Ruth 1:16) “In that context Ruth encounters Boaz, her future husband.”³⁴

Moabites were excluded from the nation of Israel (Deut. 23:3). But because she put faith in the God of Israel, she was accepted which is an illustration of God's grace to the Gentiles (Eph. 2:11-22). Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer, is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ who paid the price to redeem us and make us His bride. The unknown kinsman was unwilling to jeopardize his inheritance for the sake of Ruth, but Boaz loved Ruth and he made her a part of his inheritance. By buying back the land of Naomi, as well as marrying Ruth and fathering a son to keep the family line alive, Boaz acts as a redeemer. “Boaz's gracious treatment of Ruth is unusual as well as exemplary.”³⁵

³³ Michael D. Coogan, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible 3d*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 391.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

This humble Gentile woman married a Jew and became a part of salvation history. “Ruth is not a polemic book. The values it proclaims- loyalty, love of family and generosity toward strangers”³⁶ are qualities of a Discippler.

Throughout the Gospel narratives one is able to see that Jesus Christ was an obedient Son. He followed what He saw the Father do (Jn. 5:19). He received His directives from heaven and developed His work plan from the Father’s agenda. The agenda was to make disciples and Jesus was focused on that goal. He was so focused that; each of the Gospels and the book of Acts have included various versions of the “great commission” in the Biblical record. (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-18; Lk. 24:44-49; Jn. 20:21; Acts 1:8).

“Go and make disciples of all nations.” (Mt. 28:19) The mission of the church is stated in clear and concise terms: to disciple the people of God so that they affect the world for Christ. This is Jesus’ directive to his church as a whole and to his children individually. “Make disciples” is a command, not an option. Jesus modeled the expected behavior for His disciples in Jn. 4, as He went against tradition and spoke to the woman at the well. Jesus passed through this region of outcast people. It appears that he choose this route to demonstrate the inclusiveness of the Gospel. The message of Jesus was not just for the chosen people, but it was designed for men and women of every tongue, tribe and race. He called the fields ripe for harvest to the attention of His disciples. By preparing others for greater responsibility, Jesus could multiply His influence. Disciples are instructed to turn around and make other disciples. Ultimately, that’s how we fulfill the mandate that He has given the church.

³⁶ Ibid.

In his book *The Training of the Twelve*, A.B. Bruce says: “The selection by Jesus of the twelve from the band of disciples who gradually gathered around His person is an important landmark in the Gospel history.”³⁷ Jesus recognized the need for the delegation of power. He talked about the harvest to His disciples. He said that the harvest was plenteous, but there was a need for more workers (Mt. 9:37,38). He called the twelve and gave them power from on high to do the work of the Lord. By being trained by Him they were elevated to Apostles (Matthew 10).

Realizing the necessity of the kingdom work, Jesus appointed seventy additional disciples who, like the apostles, were sent out two by two to every place and town that He would visit (Luke 10). However, in each case they would report back to Him for evaluation and recommendation. These disciples had enormous power and nothing could hurt them. When these disciples reported back they were excited and thrilled. Jesus shared with them an important lesson: “rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” (Lk. 10:20). In a moment of quiet reflection with His disciples Jesus said “Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see.” When the twelve and the seventy were preaching, they did not see the “Pharisees and the experts” humbling themselves to receive God’s truth and grace, but they saw the common people trusting the Word (Lk. 7:29-30).

Christ turned over His commission from God to His followers; as His Father had sent Him, so He was sending them (Jn. 20:21). It was a life encompassing challenge that could not be misinterpreted. This commission to his followers reflects God’s eternal purpose that all people everywhere have the opportunity to become disciples of Jesus Christ. Win Arn and Charles Arn state: “it was this command of God through Jesus

³⁷ Alexander Balmain Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1988), 29.

Christ that exerted singular direction on the early church.”³⁸ Jesus charged them to take the gospel throughout the world by making disciples.

Jesus had world vision. He expected His men to have world vision. Jesus expected them to see the world through the disciples that they would produce, just as He had seen the world through the twelve men He had trained. His vision of reaching the world through the use of developing disciples is not found in an obscure passage in the Bible, it is the theme that flows through these inspired texts. This thought had to be on Paul’s mind when he wrote to Timothy in 2 Tm. 2:2 “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” The word “thou” indicates the importance of the individual.

At Jesus’ meeting with Peter, he said: “Thou art Simon . . . thou shalt be called Cephas.” (Jn. 1:42) In essence, you are Simon, you will become a rock. When Jesus saw Peter, He did not see him as he was but as he would someday be. There is tremendous potential in the life of one person.

Again, as we look at the words of Christ in Mt. 28:18-20 it helps us to understand His definition of a disciple. Jesus saw a disciple as one who becomes a follower, who is taught, who is nurtured in the faith and who in turn, goes out to make other disciples, which are then taught and nurtured in the faith. This duplicating of disciples reflects strategy for reaching the “uttermost” part of the earth. (Acts 1:8) This became the basis of the explosive growth of the early church. “...the number of the disciples was multiplied” (Acts 6:1, 7).

In a broad sense, every Christian is a disciple. I am not referring to people who may call themselves Christians, but, in fact, are not. I speak of people who genuinely

³⁸ Arn and Arn, *The Master’s Plan*, 23.

believe and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior from sin, death, and hell. These are the people whose hope of salvation is not in themselves, but in Jesus Christ who died for them. Such people follow Jesus on the narrow road to heaven (Matt 7:13-14). Jesus is the only way to heaven. It was Jesus who said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (Jn. 14:6). The apostle Peter said, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). So people either follow Jesus unto eternal life with God or follow someone or something else to eternal death in hell. In this regard, all true Christians are disciples of Jesus.

Jesus, however, did not say, “Make Christians of all nations,” but rather “Make disciples of all nations,” Many people, including Allan Coppedge in his book *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship*, distinguishes between a believer and a disciple. Coppedge holds that one cannot be a disciple without also being a believer, but one can be a believer without being a disciple. He states: “In the biblical record, Jesus calls first for repentance and faith; then, second, as a separate event he calls believers to follow him as disciples... It is one thing to trust God initially and begin to follow him, but it is quite another to commit oneself to a covenant relationship with God and become a disciplined follower.”³⁹

Bill Hull in his book, *The Disciple Making Pastor*, affirms this distinction: “Truly regenerate believers are technically disciples from the moment of spiritual birth. True believers are followers of Jesus; this does not mean that they will become mature followers of Jesus or they will make their lives count for Christ. They may live in

³⁹ Allan Coppedge, *The Biblical Principles of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989), 41.

spiritual slumber; their lives may waste God's gifts and talents."⁴⁰ Then in reference to Jesus' twelve disciples, Hull states: "The very fact that they had to count the cost, make sacrifices and follow Him meant that Jesus requires a long and intentional process for people to become disciples. Their task began with evangelism, but that was just the start."⁴¹

This distinction may be helpful, but one must avoid the danger of implying that disciples are better than other Christians, as if they are "super Christians." The Apostle Paul, as great a disciple as he was, struggled just as much with his sinful nature as all Christians. He wrote: So I find this law at work: when I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? (Rom. 7:21-24)

No way would Paul ever say that he was in any way a better Christian than other Christians simply because he was a disciple and an apostle. In fact, he wrote that he did not deserve to be called an apostle because he had persecuted God's people and only by God's grace did he become an apostle. (1 Cor. 15:9-10).

No Christian should become spiritually stagnant, but rather all should "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 3:18). This growth should be continuous throughout one's life as that person follows Jesus Christ by faith. All Christians should become reproducing disciples.

⁴⁰ Bill Hull, *The Disciple-Making Pastor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1988), 58.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

What should the “product” of discipleship look like? Bill Hull is helpful in answering this question as he studies Jesus’ definition of a disciple in Jn. 15:7-17. He identifies six characteristics of a disciple. First, a disciple remains in Christ. “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you” (Jn. 15:7). Christ means that he and his followers must maintain an organic relationship⁴² Not all remain, especially when the going gets tough; however, a disciple will remain in a faith relationship with Jesus and follow him no matter what the circumstances.

A disciple remains by being “in the Word” and by communicating with God through prayer. Jesus had earlier stated, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples” (Jn. 8:31). The disciple is committed to believing and obeying Scripture, which is the Word of God. Hull indicates that being rightly related to Christ’s words has at least three dimensions functionally: study, fight, and defend. A disciple “will read the Bible, study the Bible, memorize the Bible, and be able to teach and apply the Bible to life.”⁴³ A disciple also must use God’s Word to fight against temptation and against the philosophies of this world. We must know what God’s word says concerning anything we face in this world. Many Christians are biblically illiterate and, therefore, not equipped for battle. A disciple must also defend the Christian faith among the skeptics and false teachers. “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. (1 Pet. 3:15). This can be done if one is rightly related to God’s Word.

⁴² Ibid., 61.

⁴³ Ibid., 62.

A disciple remains in Christ by being committed to prayer. “Ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you” (Jn. 15:7). Hull states, “Communication with God forms the basis of remaining and the root of living as a disciple.”⁴⁴ Communication is essential in developing a personal relationship. God communicates to us through Scripture. We communicate with him through prayer.

Second, a disciple is obedient. Jesus says, “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love” (Jn. 15:10). Disciples obey Jesus, not reluctantly or out of guilt or fear, but from love. Earlier Jesus had said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command” (Jn. 14:15). Jesus even included obedience in his great commission: “and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Mt. 28:20). A disciple not only believes God’s Word, but obeys it. This does not mean the disciple is perfect, but rather is growing in sanctification.

Third, a disciple bears fruit. Jesus says, “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. . . . You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.” (Jn. 15:8, 16a)

This fruit includes the fruit of the Holy Spirit as listed in Gal. 5:22-23 “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” The more disciples grow in their relationship with God, the more the Holy Spirit produces this fruit in their lives. Discipling others is also part of the fruit Jesus refers to. Jesus expects his disciples to reproduce. This fruit will last unto eternity.

Fourth, a disciple glorifies God. “This is to my Father’s glory” (Jn. 15:8). Glorifying God should be the overall goal in every Christian’s life. Paul writes, “So

⁴⁴ Ibid., 65.

whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). There are many ways to glorify God, whether individually or as a congregation of believers, but Hull states, “The church best glorifies God by making disciples, simply because fruit-bearing believers glorify God”⁴⁵

Fifth, a disciple has joy, Jesus says, “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete” (Jn. 15:11). Joy is different than happiness. Happiness is dependent upon one’s circumstances in life. If life is going well, the person is happy. Since circumstances change, happiness comes and goes. Joy is not a subjective feeling, but an objective state. Hull defines joy as “a supernatural sense of well-being that comes from knowing that we are pleasing to God.”⁴⁶ Joy is knowing God personally as our Savior. Joy remains despite changing circumstances of life. Michael Foss wrote *Real Faith for Real Life*, in which he states: “Our joy is sustainable and renewable.”⁴⁷

Sixth, a disciple loves as Christ loves. Jesus says, “My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends” (Jn. 15:12-13). This love is not merely a sentimental, emotional type of love, but a sacrificial love based on decision and commitment. Jesus had shown his love for the disciples in many different ways, but the ultimate proof of his love was his sacrificial death on the cross. Disciples are to love people sacrificially, always doing what is best for the other person and giving of themselves. Love is a key ingredient in winning people for Jesus Christ; therefore, it is the mark of a true disciple.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 71.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Michael W. Foss, *Real Faith for Real Life* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2004), 9.

There are a host of other characteristics of a disciple of Jesus, but these six are the basic ones. Whatever means a discipleship program may employ, the “end product” or goal must be the kind of disciple as Jesus describes in John 15. Knowing this helps one to determine how to disciple others.

How did Jesus make disciples? Did he have a definite plan or strategy? A few key books have been written to answer these questions. One is the classic *The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Robert E. Coleman. In it he identifies eight principles which underpin Jesus’ method of discipleship: selection, association, consecration, impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision, and reproduction.

Coleman states, “The initial objective of Jesus’ plan was to enlist men who could bear witness to his life and carry on his work after he returned to the Father”⁴⁸ Jesus selected twelve men out of his many followers to train them to produce disciples. More than twelve would have made intimacy and training more difficult. One can work more effectively with a small group. Jesus did not select these twelve because they were better or more religious than other people. Jesus, out of his grace, selected men who were willing to learn. Coleman states, “They were indeed ‘unlearned and ignorant’ according to the world’s standard (Acts 4:13), but they were teachable.”⁴⁹

The next principle is that of association. Jesus, without ignoring the multitudes, devoted most of his time to the training of the twelve. Coleman writes, “though he did what he could to help the multitudes, he had to devote himself primarily to a few men,

⁴⁸ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* 2d abr. (Grand Rapids, MI: Spire, 2005), 27.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.

rather than the masses, in order that the masses could at last be saved. This was the genius of his strategy.”⁵⁰

Discipling others takes much time. Jesus had only about three years to disciple the twelve, so he spent much of his time with them. They followed Jesus everywhere and learned from him in many different ways and in many different situations. Class was always in session. Coleman states, “Knowledge was gained by association before it was understood by explanation.”⁵¹

Jesus required obedience from his disciples. They had to be consecrated to him. Jesus said, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it” (Lk. 9:23-24). Disciples must count the cost of following Jesus. If one does not allow Jesus be the center of his life, he cannot be a disciple. Coleman writes, “It soon became apparent that being a disciple of Christ involved far more than a joyful acceptance of the Messianic promise: it meant the surrender of one’s whole life to the Master in absolute submission to his sovereignty.”⁵²

To follow Jesus means, in part, to forsake sin and the ways of this world. Following Jesus means, not only believing in him, but also obeying him. Jesus modeled this for the disciples by willingly and lovingly obeying his heavenly Father at all times. Jesus taught his disciples to obey since he expected them to become like him.

The fourth principle is impartation. Jesus gave much to his disciples: time, truth, joy, love, keys to the kingdom, the Holy Spirit, and so on. The list is endless. “He gave

⁵⁰ Ibid., 36.

⁵¹ Ibid., 42.

⁵² Ibid., 52.

them all he had—nothing was withheld, not even his own life.”⁵³ Jesus taught his disciples to give of themselves to others and have a heart of service. Jesus said that he had come, not to be served, but to serve and to give as freely as they received (Mt. 20:28). They were not to hoard all that Jesus had given them and taught them, but rather share all that they had received as they disciples others. Since they possessed life in Christ, they gave themselves away in service to God.

Demonstrating the Christian life is the next principle. Jesus taught his disciples how to live. He taught them to pray, to use scripture, to witness, to serve, and so forth. Jesus modeled for his disciples how to live God’s way. Later, the disciples would model for others the Christian way of life. The Apostle Paul, even though he was converted after Jesus’ death and resurrection, told the Corinthian Christians, “Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). Coleman states “those of us who are seeking to train men must be prepared to have them follow us, even as we follow Christ.”⁵⁴

The sixth principle is delegation. Jesus gave his disciples work to do, especially that of evangelism. Jesus sent them out two by two, but only after training them first and giving them specific instructions. In essence, the disciples were doing the work of Christ. Coleman states, “The mission of his disciples was not different in principle or method from his own. He began by giving them his own authority and power to do his work and he closed by assuring them that what they were doing was as though he was doing it

⁵³ Ibid., 62.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 76.

himself. “He that receiveth you receiveth me” (Mt. 10:40). Think of this identity! The disciples were to be the actual representatives of Christ as they went forth.”⁵⁵

After Jesus rose from the dead, he clearly delegated this task of evangelism to his disciples. He was not asking, he was commanding: “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (Jn. 20:21). Jesus told Peter three times to feed his sheep (Jn. 21:17). Before he ascended into heaven, Jesus commissioned his disciples and all who would follow him, to “go and make disciples of all nations. (Mt. 28:19). Jesus was always building up his ministry to the time when his disciples would have to take over his work and go out into the world with the redeeming gospel.”⁵⁶

Jesus also supervised his disciples. They were accountable to him and he checked up on them. Both after Jesus had sent the twelve and Seventy out, they gathered together later to share their experiences and receive further instruction from him (Mk. 6:30, Lk. 10:17). Coleman writes, “What time he was with them, he was helping them to understand the reason for some previous action or getting them ready for some new experience. His questions, illustrations, warnings, and admonitions were calculated to bring out those things that they needed to know in order to fulfill his work, which was the evangelization of the world.”⁵⁷

No matter what the disciples encountered in life, Jesus would check up on them and help them learn from their experiences. This would help make Jesus’ teachings practical and relevant. Jesus’ supervision of his disciples was always for a purpose. Coleman writes, “The important thing about this super visionary work of Jesus was that

⁵⁵ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 79.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 89.

he kept the disciples going on toward the goal he had set for them. He did not expect more from his disciples than they could do, but he did expect their best, and this he expected to continuously be improved as they grew in knowledge and grace. His plan of teaching, by example, assignment, and constant checkup, was calculated to bring out the best that was in them.”⁵⁸

The eighth principle is reproduction. Jesus expected his disciples to reproduce by making more disciples. Jesus’ plan to reach the lost is to send out his disciples with the message of the Gospel that more and more might be saved. But his plan includes more than just evangelism, it includes reproducing disciples. These disciples would in turn reproduce themselves in making other disciples, and so forth. “His whole evangelistic strategy depended upon the faithfulness of his chosen disciples to this task.”⁵⁹

Jesus successfully disciplined mature adults, one Biblical example is provided for us in Mt. 27:57. After His crucifixion the Bible says rich man asked for the body of Jesus whose name was Joseph of Arimathea. Another synoptic gospel book indicates He was more than just a rich man. Mk. 15:43 says he was a “prominent member” of the Council (the Sanhedrin), both Joseph and Nicodemus were members of the Sanhedrin and Jewish custom preferred that each member be at least forty years old according to Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan’s *Handbook of Jewish Thought*. We are not exactly sure how old Joseph and Nicodemus were, but it is relatively safe to assume that they were seasoned due to other stringent requirements of council members and their respect in the community.

His disciples did not fail him as the book of Acts testifies. The Twelve made disciples because Jesus trained them to do so, Robert Coleman also wrote the *Master*

⁵⁸ Ibid., 94.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 99.

Plan of Discipleship to show just how the disciples carried on the work of Jesus. In this book Coleman relates how the disciples implemented the principles of discipleship which Jesus had used and taught. The Acts pericope reads, “Not committee meetings or study conferences. Miracles are happening; lives are being transformed; the world is being turned upside down. In the space of one generation, a little company of Jesus’ disciples with explosive force sweeps from Jerusalem to Rome and develops from a small sect into a universal church. Nothing can defeat them; not the beatings of swaggering tyrants, not the cunning of embittered religious rulers, not the internal struggles of discontented members; but like a mighty army with banners, they move out to disciple the nations in the Name of their risen and reigning Lord.”⁶⁰

Jesus said in Jn. 8:31, “If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed.” Abide means to remain, to continue. A believer who continues to obey the word is a disciple. The Bible tells us the disciples spent three years with Jesus before He commissioned them to go out on their own (Mt. 28:19). They were trained in the presence, practice and teaching of Jesus.

In Mt. 11:28-29 Jesus says “Come to Me, all who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.” The word “learn” is the verb form of the word for “disciple.” Jesus is saying, “Come and be discipled by Me” This is a wonderful invitation to become a disciple.

⁶⁰ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell, 1990), 13-14.

Historical Foundation

The writer's connection with the African continent is important in the faith journey. John Mbiti says in his introduction of *African Religions and Philosophy* that "Africans are notoriously religious."⁶¹ "Christianity in Africa is so old that it can rightly be described as an indigenous traditional and African religion. Long before the start of Islam in the seventh century, Christianity was well established all over North Africa, Egypt, parts of the Sudan and Ethiopia. It was a dynamic form of Christianity, producing great scholars and theologians like Tertullian, Origen, Clement of Alexandria and Augustine. African Christianity made a great contribution to Christendom through scholarship, participation in Church councils, defense of the Faith, movements like monasticism, theology, translation and preservation of the Scriptures."⁶² "Christianity has been in Africa for two thousand years and, at one time claimed up to one half of the continent geographically."⁶³ Glenn Usry and Craig Keener state in their book *Black Man's Religion* that "Christianity developed earlier and spread faster in North Africa than in most other parts of the empire; while the main language of the Roman church remained Greek, Latin Christianity originated there, ultimately shaping the thought of the Roman Church."⁶⁴

⁶¹ John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, Second Revised and Enlarged Edition, (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1989), 1.

⁶² Ibid., 223.

⁶³ Ibid., 256.

⁶⁴ Glenn Usry and Craig Keener, *Black Man's Religion* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 33.

West African John Mbiti professed, “I am because we are, and because we are, I am.”⁶⁵ This concept is known as *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* (pronounced oo-BOON-too), is a sub-Saharan African ethic or ideology focusing on people’s allegiances and relations with each other. The word has its origin in the Bantu languages of Southern Africa.

Africans have this thing called *ubuntu*. It is about the essence of being human. It is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being able to go the extra mile for the sake of others. We believe that a person is a person through other persons, that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours.

The African *ubuntu* is relational to the biblical *oikos* the Greek word for household utilized in the Biblical narrative. *Oikos* is the natural network and *ubuntu* is the relationship you have with those in your natural network.

Historical biblical information was most helpful in supporting the *ubuntu* and *oikos* connection. In Win Arn and Charles Arn’s book: *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples* they provide interesting perspective on the importance of *oikos* in the 21st century. The Wins call family, “webs of common kinship (the larger family), common friendship (friends and neighbors), and common associates (work associates and people with common interests or recreational pursuits) are still the paths most people follow in becoming Christians today.”⁶⁶

Not many families in today’s society can boast of four generations living together in one household. However there happens to be some family units that take care of their matriarch and patriarch family elders in their latter years and are able to glean knowledge

⁶⁵ Mbiti, *African Religions*, 106.

⁶⁶ Arn and Arn, *The Master’s Plan*, 45.

and wisdom from their longevity. These sages are able to share and care for other members of the clan, while they are receiving loving family assistance. Cain Hope Felder's book, *Troubling Biblical Waters*, helps distinguish the African household, which traditionally includes grandparents and other blood relatives, from the European nuclear family paradigm."⁶⁷

Author Hans Walter Wolff states that Old Testament households often included four generations of relatives, slaves and even foreign workers.⁶⁸ The definition of family given by Carolyn Osiek and David Balch in their book *Families in the New Testament World*, helps us with Biblical terminology. They say, "Neither ancient Greek nor Hebrew nor Latin had words that translate what modern Western English means by "family" or "house." The Greek *oikos*, *oikia*, Hebrew *bayit*, and Latin *domus* can all refer to the physical building but can all just as well, and more often do mean: household, including material goods and slaves; immediate blood family; or family lineage."⁶⁹

Old Testament Scripture confirms again and again the significance and uniqueness of the household and the family. God's original promise to Abraham included the provision that through him "all families of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. 12:3). Similar to the African concept, the word family, according to noted biblical historian

⁶⁷ Cain Hope Felder, *Troubling Biblical Waters Race, Class and Family* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), 151.

⁶⁸ Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1974), 215.

⁶⁹ Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 6.

Cornel Goerner, “does not refer to the simple family unit composed of a man, his wife, and their children, but rather describes the extended families or the *oikos*.”⁷⁰

The New Testament extends the *oikos* factor throughout its Biblical narrative. Jesus was getting into a boat and the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with him, however Jesus said go home to your family and tell them how the Lord has had mercy on you (Mk. 5:18-19). A royal official (Jn. 4:47-53) requested Jesus’ assistance before his child died. Jesus said go and your son will live, when the official got back home he realized Jesus’ power, because his son got better at the exact time Jesus said. So he and his household believed.

Even as we look at Christ’s disciples, we are given examples of “*ubuntu* and *oikos*.” The first thing Andrew did was find his brother Simon Peter, and tell him “We have found the Messiah” (Jn. 1:41). When Jesus told Phillip to follow me, he found his friend a person in his network named Nathaniel. Even though Nathaniel had some disparaging words about Jesus of Nazareth he acknowledged that He was the Son of God (Jn. 1:45-49). The biblical record is endless regarding the relational influence believers have on their family, friends and associates. The impact that Jesus had on the disciples and the disciples had on their *oikos* caused the early church to grow in large proportions. Kenneth Latourette writes that “the primary change agents in the spread of faith were the men and women who earned their livelihood in some purely secular manner, and spoke of their faith to those whom they met in this natural fashion.”⁷¹

⁷⁰ Cornell Goerner, *All Nations in God’s Purpose* (Nashville, TN: Boardman, 1979), 23.

⁷¹ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity, The First Five Centuries* vol. 1 (New York, NY: Harper, 1937), 116.

Professors Osiek and Balch provide extensive archaeological information to help us understand the ancient Christian Family in the context of a Greco-Roman city.⁷² “It is in this environment; the earliest Christianity was born and developed. All evidence points to domestic buildings as the first sites for Christian gatherings.”⁷³ The New Testament provides substantial evidence of the house churches as meeting places for believers. For example, a prayer meeting was held in the house of the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12). Another example is when Paul and Silas met at Lydia’s house of whom accepted baptism “with all of her household” (Acts 16:14-15). Priscilla and Aquila also had an ekklesia in their home (1 Cor. 16:19). If the smaller churches wanted to have a common assembly, then the churches would find a larger location to accommodate the meeting.⁷⁴

In Dulles’ *Models of the Church* he offers another model of the church that he perceives emerging from the stands of history and the Bible; that of the church as a “community of disciples.” The call to discipleship in its many and various degrees continued in the early church. As the church was persecuted it counted on the discipline of its members. With the conversion of Constantine, the church was “ipso facto” more involved in social institutions, resulting in a more accommodating attitude to ordinary social structures. Still, discipleship as a call to be something different was not lost. The desert fathers carried on a strict tradition. Later medieval monks, friars imitated early church discipleship. Throughout history the laity was called to practice some kind of “interior discipleship, embracing the values and priorities upheld by Jesus.”⁷⁵

⁷² Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament*, 1-35.

⁷³ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 33.

⁷⁵ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 204.

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church

The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26). The Antioch Missionary Baptist Church is located at 63d and Stewart streets in the Englewood community of Chicago, Illinois. This Church been in existence for eighty-two years and has a rich history in the Baptist tradition and is a member of the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America which was founded in 1883.

The Antioch M. B. Church had a peculiar beginning. A band of 101 members that had severed their connection from the Salem Baptist Church located at 30th and LaSalle Street and formed the church.⁷⁶ This group asked Rev. E. H. Branch of Texas to come to Chicago and preach. Rev. Branch was the Treasurer, of the National Convention. He was born in Richmond, Texas in 1876. Upon the advice of Rev. Branch, this group organized a mission and later a church named the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church. The church continued to grow under the leadership of Rev. Branch. Under his pastorate, they purchased a Jewish Synagogue for \$65,000, located at 5129 South Indiana. Rev. Branch served faithfully for nine years (1923-1932).

The tremendous growth of Antioch in the early years and the church community at large had to be attributed to the great migration as referred to by Wilmore. “Even though this migration took place during the early 1900’s, the northern cities Negro

⁷⁶ Matkin Butler, “*A Historical Sketch of the Development of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church at Stewart and Englewood Avenues from 1923 through 1961*” (Chicago, IL: Chicago Baptist Institute, June 1962).

populations continued to grow in large proportions. Chicago's south and west sides grew by over 30%.”⁷⁷

The second Pastor selected was Rev. James Monroe Harvey of Shreveport, Louisiana. Rev. Harvey provided Antioch with tremendous leadership until 1956. He was considered a beloved leader, pastor, preacher, and friend. Antioch was a wealthy church, and under the leadership of Rev. Harvey the church had amassed assets and cash in excess of \$100,000. This amount in 1957 was quite impressive for a church that started with 101 members and no cash in 1923.⁷⁸

The third pastor of Antioch was Rev. Wilbur Nathan Daniel, who had the benefit of serving with Rev. Harvey prior to his death. This initial period provided Rev. Daniel with some insight regarding the formidable task that lay ahead. He was elected pastor of Antioch on March 7, 1957. Within one year the building at 5129 S. Indiana had become too small. A larger sanctuary was found with a community building that attracted the attention of Antioch's new pastor and growing membership. During the first service in the new building, 58 new members were baptized. Within two years this building was rehabilitated and the mortgage was paid off in full. Under Rev. Daniel's leadership, Antioch has built 8 housing developments. Four are located in the Englewood community. Rev. Daniel served Antioch for 42 years.

In January, 2001, Antioch elected its fourth Pastor, Rev. Gerald M. Dew, from Houston Texas. Pastor Dew presented the following mission statement to the Church membership which was approved and adopted: *We are united to Evangelize,*

⁷⁷ Gayraud Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of African Americans* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 171.

⁷⁸ Ibid., *Historical Sketch*.

Educate, Equip and Empower humanity for the glory of God through the Proclamation of the Gospel, the Explanation of the Scriptures and the Exaltation of the Savior (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, Ephesians 4:11-1).

New programs and ministries are currently being developed. One of these programs will be the discipleship program resulting from this research.

Theological Foundation

When the writer first entered the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, the first class he took was Systematic Theology. This was a perplexing situation at best. However, during the semester the professor shared with the class some of the noted theologians such as: Barth, Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, and Schleirmacher. Although the class was difficult, the student will never forget the story about one of the visits Karl Barth made to America.

A young reporter had made a request to interview him based on his writings and views on Theology which he granted. Dr. Barth, who was known for rather long sentences in his “works” that had been translated to the English language from German, provided an interesting interview. One of the last questions the reporter ask was; “what is the greatest thought that has ever come across your mind?” The reporter was prepared for a long rambling sentence, because he had been writing at a rather hectic pace through-out the interview. The great Karl Barth thought for a moment and then replied; Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” He was not trying to be funny; he just understood and shared the simple truth that is the “foundation” on which the Christian faith is built. That simple song that many of us learned as children (if we attended

church) rings true. Jesus surely does love us and the word of God confirms and provides that critical foundation to assist believers in this walk of faith.

Theology is the study of God and what we know and understand about Him. It is a process of thinking about our human existence in light of our faith. St. Anselm the eleventh century theologian provides the definition of theology that is quite popular “Faith seeking understanding.” Augustine, another theologian who lived during that period said of theology, “I believe in order that I might understand.” Dr. Dwight Hopkins, during the August, 2005 intensive at United Theological Seminary provided several definitions of theology: “it is the process that raises questions about all things we take for granted as it pertains to our faith in the world. Theology is a response to faith.”⁷⁹

Thomas and Wondra’s in *Introduction to Theology* say “Theology in the broad sense can be divided into four parts: biblical, historical, systematic, and practical.”⁸⁰ “Biblical theology is that discipline which sets forth the message of the books of the Bible in their historical setting.”⁸¹ “Biblical theology is neither the story of humanity’s search for God, nor is it a description of a history of religious experience. Biblical theology is theology: it is primarily a story about God and his concern for human beings.”⁸² It is the study of various books of the Bible and emphasizes the different aspects of theology that it focuses on. While this part of theology was influential in the

⁷⁹ Dwight N. Hopkins, “Spirit in the City” (lecture presented at United Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry Intensive, Dayton, Ohio, August 17, 2005).

⁸⁰ Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology* 3d ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 2002), 16.

⁸¹ George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament Revised Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1993), 20.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 21.

mid twenty century it received considerable opposition from Rudolf Bultmann, who was influential during this period.⁸³

“Historical theology is the study of the ways in which the church has interpreted the Bible and Christian faith and lived them out in Christian history.”⁸⁴ “Christianity is a history-based religion; one of the chief values of Scripture is that it speaks of that History. Virtually all that is known of the origins of Christianity is recorded in the books of the New Testament. Other references to this faith, including writings not included in the New Testament, furnish additional glimpse into Christianity’s origins; welcome as these are, they are of limited use except by comparison with the biblical text.”⁸⁵ This part of theology takes into consideration Biblical Inerrancy, Primacy of Scripture and The Canon of Scripture.

Systematic theology refers the organization of a topic in various areas in the Bible and arranges that topic specific systematically from everywhere it appears in the Bible. Thomas and Wondra say, “Systematic or dogmatic theology has been defined above as the explication of the Christian faith and the testing of the church’s language about God in light of its norm. It includes apologetics and ethics, which are separated only for expedient reasons.”⁸⁶ This particular type of theology was utilized as the biblical foundation was established for discipleship. The writer chose to include various scriptures to show how Jesus and disciples went about the work designed by the Master Teacher.

⁸³ Ibid., 10.

⁸⁴ Thomas and Wondra, *Introduction to Theology*, 17.

⁸⁵ Howard W. Stone and James O. Duke, *How to Think Theologically* 2d ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 47.

⁸⁶ Thomas and Wondra, *Introduction to Theology*, 17.

Practical theology deals with the doctrine of the church and the doctrine of ministry. These doctrines help the writer to frame the definition for Practical theology “as the way we do church.” This theological concept identifies what the church was called to do and does exactly that through its ministries. “The doctrine of the church is central to the curriculum of theological education, since it is the fulcrum or transition between the biblical, historical, and systematic studies and practical disciplines. The disciplines of practical theology deal with the practice of the church and its members.”⁸⁷ Under the doctrine of ministry, members are called to *diakonia* (service). “In the New Testament, all ministries in general sense of mission and service derives from the Christian events, that is, from Jesus’ mission and ministry, his teaching and actions, his death and resurrection, and the gift of his Spirit.”⁸⁸ Jesus choose and sends out the twelve apostles (Mk. 3:14) and then the seventy (Lk. 10:1) and give them power and authority to act in his name in preaching, teaching and healing (Mt. 10:40).⁸⁹ This is the essence of the theology involved in development of a discipleship curriculum.

The connection between faith and theology must reach into the depths of epistemology and theological method. Jesus did not choose theologians, reporters, historians and scholars to follow him dispassionately; he developed and created a community of disciples to get actively involved in the kingdom business. Theology relates to the interpretation of God as a process. However, the first step of this process is faith. We begin with faith, and then go into theological process to reflect on that faith ultimately returning to that faith. Our faith must be an active faith. To practice theology

⁸⁷ Ibid., 257.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 301.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

well, we must love both theology and the God of whom it is about. Our goal should be to be changed by them.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Each person is given something to do that shows Who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people. The variety is wonderful (1 Cor. 12:6, the Message).

Learning Styles

Marlene D. LeFever, author of *Learning Styles*, delineates learning styles by giving names and definitions to four types of learners: Imaginative Learners, who easily share from their past experience, provide a context for learning; Analytic learners, who need to learn something new in the lesson; Common Sense learners need to see if what they learned makes sense now; Dynamic Learners are learners who find creative ways to use what they have learned.⁹⁰

Imaginative learners help answer the question, “Why do I need this? They enjoy talking and sharing their life experiences. Analytic learners help answer the question, “What does the Bible say about my need?” Common sense learners help answer the

⁹⁰ Marlene D. LeFever, *Learning Styles Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1995), 21-22.

question, “How does what the Bible teaches actually work?” Dynamic learners help answer the question, “Now, how will I use what I have learned?” Once we understand the different type of learners we are better able to begin the process of the teacher’s role.

Utilizing the above mentioned definitions of learning styles, and considering our specific interest of adults fifty years and above, a Curriculum was designed for “mature adults” with an emphasis on incorporating the various learning styles in each lesson. Classes were held and lessons were presented. Much discussion and interaction was pursued from written and verbal comments. These sessions proved to be as beneficial to the students as they were for the instructor.

These mature adults who have been in church a considerable length time (class average thirty years) have a general knowledge of familiar scriptures, Bible stories and themes that have been repeated on a regular basis during their involvement and participation in the body of Christ. It was the writer’s objective to awaken these memories along with “their stories” and demonstrate how these life lessons can be absorbed into who they are sprinkled with scripture and shared with their *oikos*.

Outline of the Research Method

Hypothesis

In order for a church to grow it must disciple its membership. Antioch has an aging membership that should benefit greatly from a discipleship program geared toward older adults. A specific discipleship curriculum should assist mature adults in discipling others.

Description of Ministry Project

This project developed a discipleship curriculum for the mature adult. A total of six lessons were developed. The purpose of these lessons was to reacquaint the class participants with the definition of a disciple and an understanding that this is God's goal for His people. The initial lesson began with the church's mission Statement and how this series of lessons work in concert with the mission to Evangelize, Educate, Equip and Empower. These lessons were interactive including case studies, role plays, games and intellectual stimulation.

Lesson One: A Disciple's Heart

The heart of a disciple is one that is courageous and takes the initiative in relationships. Paul in Philippians 4 shares how to plant seeds of contentment in the heart. This is done through peace, by thinking on the right things, by doing, rejoicing in the Lord and learning how to be content.

Lesson Two: Blessed Assurance

As believers we have assurance in salvation. Often times we may lose sight of our assurance based on actions caused by our sin nature. However, the Bible provides assurances for us that cannot be removed once we have trusted in Jesus.

Lesson Three: A Mighty God

Our God is omniscience, omnipresent, and omnipotent. In Isaiah the 9th chapter, He provides for us peaceful confidence, peaceful compassion and peaceful completion. Through the creation of this world God has demonstrated His power

Lesson Four: The Word of God

This lesson provides a basis for understanding the revelation, inspiration and illumination of God's Word. Participants also explored the source, purpose, power and application of the His Word.

Lesson Five: Renewed Strength

This lesson emphasized the importance of the daily renewal of our on-going relationship with the Father; done through the repetitive activities of prayer, devotion and meditation.

Research Design

There is a new age nation emerging with great power and influence, it is called the AARP nation. For those of you who are not familiar with AARP, it stands for American Association of Retired Persons. AARP has over 35 million members and it is an organization for people age fifty and over. Statistics indicate that 25% of the U. S. populace is in the fifty plus category.

Research has shown that this population of “fifty plus” enjoy sharing their life experiences. As opportunities arise, if equipped, they’re more than willing to share their faith in a simple, warm, and personal way with family, friends and neighbors.⁹¹ In the book “Forty-Sixty” the author shares that “God, who made you is also with you at every stage of life. Aging affords each of us an opportunity to grow in faith, in wisdom, in understanding, and in the ability to witness to others our faith in Jesus Christ regardless of the circumstances.”⁹² This group is comfortable with certain methods of learning. Consideration has been given to the above mentioned conditions while designing lessons to be presented to this group.

Measurement

Pre and post surveys were completed by class participants on the first and last class. Additionally, comments arose during classes that were recorded for future evaluation. The results have been compiled and presented in this document.

Instrumentation

Qualitative analysis was the method used to evaluate the results compiled for the surveys as well as the writer’s observation of class participants.

⁹¹ David P. Gallagher, *Senior Adult Ministry in the 21st Century* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2002), 24.

⁹² Richard H. Gentzler, Jr. and Craig Kennet Miller, *Forty-Sixty* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2001), 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

After reviewing many books and materials on Discipleship programs as well as internet and library research, the writer determined that there was limited information available regarding Discipling the mature adult. The majority of the information that made reference to the mature adult seemingly gave most preference to the senior citizen 65 years of age and above.

Project Initiation

Observing the congregational activities and the current Christian Education structure at Antioch, the writer discussed project ideas for enhancing the mature adults' educational experiences with the Pastor. After several meetings and discussions with mentors and peers it was determined that this could indeed become a beneficial project to the church. Several months before the actual project implementation, the writer met again with the Pastor, and randomly selected class participants for the project and solicited their help and participation in the process

Project Implementation

The Discipleship Curriculum for Mature Adults consists of six lessons which can be presented in any order. During the month of July five of these six lessons were taught on Sunday mornings as suggested by the Pastor between the times of 8:30 until 10:30. Breakfast was provided for participants and the sessions were lively and fast-paced.

The United Doctoral Program requirements were reviewed with the class along with a slide presentation of the proposed project. This was done not only to inform the participants of the process but also to impress upon them the importance of their attendance during this process. The average attendance per class was seventeen.

During the initial lesson the Church's mission statement was reviewed to assure the class that this proposed program fit into the Pastor's agenda for the church to provide training and educational opportunities for the membership. Class members agreed and took ownership in this opportunity.

During each session an agenda, class lessons and prepared activities were given to each class member. During the end of the first session a pre-test was given to identify the class's aptitude in Discipling others. Additional information was shared to expose to some and verify for others that they were a part of the AARP generation. Although most of the students were baby boomers, not all had arrived at the fifty and over age.

Lesson Overviews

Lesson One objectives were to have students to:

- Recognize the characteristics of a discipler's heart.

- Identify the steps involved in reaching the goal of being content
- Understand the rationale for discipleship.
- Understand that discipleship begins at home.

The Biblical support came from Phil. 4:4-11 and Jn. 1:39-41. The case study presented to the class explored ways to plant a seed of contentment, using an illustration on how roots grow deep in search for nourishment thus making the plant stronger. The right seeds planted in the heart will aid the disciple in their growth process. Guiding the students toward the goal of understanding how to have a heart of contentment was our purpose. The class was introduced to two new words the African concept of “*ubuntu*” (I am because you are, and because you are I am), and the Greek word *oikos* (family, friends and associates, your sphere of influence). They were asked to begin to develop a list of individuals in their family who they could disciple for future class discussions. Each session ended with prayer.

Lesson Two objectives were to:

- Recollect and share the story of the beginning of their spiritual journeys.
- Be assured of their salvation
- Identify tactics for assuring the salvation of others.
- Understand that God has forgiven all of our sins.

As the second class (Blessed Assurance) began two weeks later, students were given their packets and the review of the initial lesson. Students were also given a quiz testing their recall of the previous lesson. Surprisingly, over half of the participants remembered the seeds of contentment.

This class was designed to guide students in remembering significant stories in their spiritual journeys. One thing that continued to be mentioned during research for this project was that the mature individual liked to share their experiences. The assurance of salvation was the goal however, allowing students to think about those meaningful experiences and realizing the ability to share these experiences with others could be significant in the discipleship process.

The Biblical support came from Jn. 14:27, 1 Jn. 5:11-13, 1 Jn. 1:7, and Col. 2:13-14. The case study came from the life story of Fannie Crosby who was blind from infancy who penned the words to the classic hymn, “Blessed Assurance” after hearing the melody played by her friend. She wrote over 8,000 hymns and sacred songs. Even though she did not have the benefit of sight, she had the assurance of her salvation. Additional Bible verses regarding the assurances of salvation were provided for future study.

During the second class, the fifth lesson of “Renewed Strength” was also presented. The intent of this class was to assist the students in understanding the importance of daily communication with the Father. The simple premise used was if Jesus prayed to renew his strength, we should also. The Bible provides for us several examples of Jesus’ prayer to His Father. Not only did Jesus pray, but many biblical heroes also had lives of prayer. Daniel prayed three times a day. Abraham, Moses and Elijah prayed. Hannah, Rebekah, and David prayed. Prayer is essential in a disciple’s relationship to God.

Lesson Five objectives were to:

- Identify the five parts of prayer
- Understand of how to pray secretly, sincerely and specifically

- Understand the importance of daily devotion
- Understand the Biblical expression of meditation

The Biblical support came from Mk. 1:35, Mt. 6:5-13, and Jn. 17:1-26. The case study of the fifth lesson came from Christian individuals who developed skills through repetition and practice which included: Dwayne Wade of the Miami Heat and Chef Nairobi Miller of Antioch. A handout listing some of the prayers in the Bible was distributed.

As the third session began, the class was required to identify the five parts of prayer and develop one sentence sermons. This activity was designed to remind them how vital it is to be in constant communication with the Father while encouraging them to begin their initial communication with family members and associates, sharing their stories. Two lessons were also presented during this session: Lesson Three “A Mighty God” and Lesson Four “The Word of God.”

Lesson Four, “The Word of God” was presented first. In this lesson we shared about how the Bible came into existence. Information was provided about the more than forty writers, who over a period of more than 1500 years, was written in different languages and countries. We also taught about the revelation, illumination and inspiration of God.

Lesson Four objectives were to:

- Develop a basic understanding of the origin of the Bible
- Understand the power of the Word
- Understand the uniqueness of the Bible
- Apply the Word of God

The Biblical support came from: 2 Tm. 3:16-17, Eph. 6:17, Ps. 119:11. The case study was a story about a man who had claimed that he had rescued the billionaire Howard Hughes in the desert before his death, and Hughes had promised him inclusion in his will. This claim could not be validated; however in the word of God there is no contradiction. The Bible is unique. Students were given a copy of a “Fast Track Reading Plan” which provides an overview of the Bible in 100 readings.

In the second half of the class, we presented Lesson Three. In this class we examined the trilogy of God’s omni attributes; His Omniscience, His Omnipresence and His Omnipotence. These characteristics that God possesses should help us to understand that God relies on no one but Himself for anything. We serve an awesome God, a sovereign and magnificent Creator.

Lesson Three objectives were to:

- Understand the Awesomeness of God
- Identify ways to explain this to others
- Realize that there is nothing we can do or any where we can go that God is not already there.
- Understand the West African (symbol) *Gye Nyame*-except for God

The Biblical Support came from Isa. 9:6-7, Job 38:4, and Phil. 2:10. The case study comes from the Isaiah text and guides the class into understanding how God’s omni power provides for us peaceful confidence, peaceful compassion, and peaceful completion.

After this class a post-survey was given and verbal comments were received from the participants about the training and information that had been provided.

The Final class was developed after the completion of the sessions. The writer felt that this series of classes were incomplete because they did not include the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. This class was entitled the “Holy Spirit and You” The lesson begins with a summation of the previous lessons taught. It emphasizes sharing “your” stories. Then lesson explains the third member of the Trinity.

Lesson Six objectives are:

- Understanding the Trinity
- Understanding the Person of the Holy Spirit
- Develop the confidence in sharing your story
- Realize that you are not alone

The Biblical support came from Acts 1:4-5, 8, Jn. 14:18-26, Ps. 139:7. The case study is personal and must be applied utilizing the power of the Holy Spirit. This would be the time for the mature disciple to share their story. Their foundation has been strengthened, their confidence has increased and their knowledge base has been enhanced.

Research Data

The pre and post surveys were evaluated. The mixed method approach was used when preparing the survey. Class sessions were held on July 9, 23, and 30, 2006. The attendance average was seventeen people per class. The average class consisted of 10 females and seven males. The youngest participant was forty-two year old and the oldest was eighty-five years old. Sixteen preclass surveys were completed and fifteen postclass surveys were completed.

Survey Questions and Results

1. How long have you been a Christian?

All sixteen have been Christians longer than fifteen years with an average of thirty-eight years. Fifteen years was the shortest length and seventy years was the longest.

2. How do you rank the following? Legacy, Mortality, Finance, Family, Career, Education.

All sixteen listed family as number one.

3. What responsibilities do elders have in a family?

Key answers: “provide leadership,” “be a positive role model,” “reserve the history and legacy of the family,” “provide emotion and financial support.”

4. Do you have an unchurched family member?

All sixteen responded “yes.”

5. How important is the Gospel to you?

All sixteen responded “Very Important.”

6. Are you comfortable in sharing the Gospel?

One participant “No,” six participants “Sometimes,” and nine participants, “Yes.”

7. How would you define Discipleship?

Seven responses indicated “Following Christ, two “Being a servant of Christ, two did not respond, and one response each for: Sharing, Development, Encouragement, Giving Your All God.

8. Do you think discipleship is important to the mature adult?

Twelve responded yes, two absolutely, one blank and one not really

9. What do you know about God's assurance of Salvation?

Eight responded that they had "Received salvation," but made no indication about assurance, four were blank responses, one "Don't Know" and one "Trust God."

10. How to plant a seed of commitment in the heart of a Discippler?

Ten "Don't Know," one "Jn. 3:16," and three were left blank. This question should have read: "How do you plant a seed of contentment not commitment."

11. When a person becomes a Christian, what happens to sin?

Nine indicated "All sin is forgiven;" four indicated only "Only past sins and not future sins/" and three responded "Only the sins that you confess."

12. How important is communication with God to a mature Discippler?

Eleven responses Very important, five participants did not respond.

Data Analysis

From the preclass survey, the results indicated that the all participants felt that family relationships are a high priority in their lives and that elders should provide leadership and be a positive role model. All participants have an unsaved family member and sharing the Gospel is very important to them. The majority of the class was comfortable in sharing the Gospel. While most struggled with the definition of Discipleship, a majority of them had the first part of the answer. A large majority indicated that Discipleship was important to the mature adult. While none were quite sure about the assurance of salvation, many indicated that they knew about salvation and had received it. The seed of contentment question was worded incorrectly by the researcher, and the responses indicated that they did not understand the question. Many answered the

sin question right, and the writer remembers teaching a class in bible class which may had some influence on this answer. Finally the majority indicated that is important to have communication with God.

The majority of the survey answers did not surprise the writer. However, one question that was not asked was “How many people have you disciplined in the past five years?” This will require further investigation.

Based on a suggestion from a context associate, the post-survey was slightly revised and included more closed-in questions. However, the basic questions did not change.

Some unexpected responses occurred from the second survey that has caused the writer some concern. While all respondents in the first survey indicated that family was important, in the post survey there was a 50% change which was perplexing. This author is still not sure why this occurred.

The question pertaining to elders in the family did not change significantly, but it must be mentioned that three respondents did indicate elders should be responsible for introducing God to the family and this was not a response in the pre-survey. However, the answer regarding the importance of sharing the Gospel delighted the writer with a 14% increase over the pretest.

Those who knew the definition of discipleship increased slightly, along with the question regarding discipleship being important to the mature adult. Although an entire lesson was presented on God’s Assurances, and additional supporting scriptural references given, the responses regarding the assurance of salvation increased only slightly. The responses to the question of how to plant a seed of contentment increased by

fifty percent; however many respondents did not remember the process introduced in the class.

Finally, there was a thirty-six percent increased in the response to the forgiveness of sin question with only one wrong answer. Is prayer important to God received 100% response of very important.

Outcome

It appears that providing instruction to the mature adult increased the level of confidence of participants to disciple others and communicate with God. Some objectives deemed important by the writer did not produce the anticipated change. It was obviously that not enough time was given for detailed explanations and digestion of materials presented during the allotted class time. Additionally, in an ideal situation only one lesson would be taught per session.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION

Reflection

This project did not deal with a pastoral response to a congregation. It is a concerned observer's perspective regarding how a church should approach aging parishioners regarding discipling their *oikos*.

Jesus trained twelve, surely one can use and model the methods that He employed to train others. He taught them, shaped them, lovingly corrected them, even changed some of their names because he saw not only who they were, but who they were going to be. Scholars have written about his methods, practitioners have utilized his innovative techniques, novices have mimicked his skills. Writer after writer have examined, dissected and analyzed his way of doing things. Books have been written regarding discipleship programs in general, but few are geared towards the mature adult. The intent of this project is to develop a workable system to teach, train and equip mature believers to disciple others, following the Biblical guide that has been passed down through

countless generations. Jesus trained his disciples for three years. The average number of years of Christian experience in the experimental group of this project is thirty-eight years. Unquestionably, we have an opportunity to take these mature adults and empower them with the Word and cover them with prayer. We have more than enough time to provide them with helpful information, expose them to proven strategies and interconnect their life experiences to prepare them to go out and make disciples.

These are some initial thoughts that surfaced in the writers' mind when reflecting on the field experience and the analysis of the data. Class participation was good and consistent. The number of students taking the pre and post survey fluctuated slightly which the writer believes impacted the results. The tests should have been coded in a systematic way so that the changes could have been more effectively measured.

It is this experts' opinion that the students genuinely enjoyed the sessions and received the information that had been prepared with enthusiasm. This was based upon the comments that were received after the completion of the classes. A relative question would be; does this genuine enthusiasm translate into an active Disciple? It is not guaranteed due to the fact that God gave us all free will. Each individual can choose if they want to follow the command that Jesus gave in Matthew 28; to go and make disciples, to teach them to observe everything he had taught them. However, it is more likely, that a person would feel more comfortable and equipped to make other disciples after completing the courses designed in this project.

King David said in Ps. 34; "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good" The students must be convinced that making disciples does not rest totally on their abilities. Their life stories may be impressive, but the total power and spirit of conviction to promote a

change comes from the Holy Spirit. Life stories are just the introduction to share a part of your life reality with that specific family member. Even while you're story is significant and inspiring true validation does not come unless it is laced with scripture and covered with prayer. God speaks to us through his Word which guides and authenticates our Discipling power.

Many of the participants expressed the fact that they needed and desired more training. When the class began they felt that they knew how to effectively share the gospel; however as additional information was received their confidence level slightly decreased instead of increased. This created a perplexing dilemma for the writer. As the resident authority, the preconceived intent was that with additional information that was specific to the subject matter, class participants would quickly digest this information and be able to share with confidence as they interacted with their circle of influence.

The data in the survey was not defined and explained in the context of the subject matter. Therefore, the end results were slightly different than the expected. This caused the writer to revise the class information, expand the number and length of the classes and reword the pre and post surveys. The surveys addressed the spiritual aspect of the project but not the practical aspect. Both surveys should be expanded to include more questions relevant to discipleship specifically those that relate to the status of the participant in his or her *oikos*.

The responses to the questions on the surveys regarding legacy and mortality received very different reactions than the creator of the survey had anticipated. The ranking of the answers for that specific question was very low on the pre and post surveys. The instructor is not sure why this happened but has incorporated additional

information in the implementation of the revised class sessions. The intent of the legacy question was that as mature adults; this should be a question that one considers as they continue to be blessed with life.

The addendum to be added to lesson one would include information such as: What is legacy? When should legacy become an issue in the family? Who is responsible for the family legacy? What does the Bible say about the legacy issue? Biblical support would come from Gen. 25:5-6, 1 Kgs. 2:1-7 and Jn. 14:15-27.

In revising the curriculum, a practical application portion will be added to each class. During class, participants will be encouraged to explore and evaluate their current circle of influence status and how they impact the lives of those around them. After class members identify those persons that need to be discipled, different methods have to be developed on how to approach them. More role plays would be beneficial in providing practical and biblical models.

A class evaluation was not given at the end of the sessions for the field experience but will be created and utilized during the implementation. The writer received significant positive verbal feedback from most of the participants. A formal written evaluation would have included the opinions of all the participants. This information would have been instrumental in revising the model and measured the impact that the information had on each individual.

The discipleship of the writer was presented by mature adults throughout different periods in his life. It is the opinion of this expert that in this changing world in which we live, communication and respect for mature adult has changed. In years past any adult could speak to a child and command respect almost immediately and adults were not

afraid of anyone. Presently with new cultural norms, a change in the rules and the advent of the hip-hop culture, the rules have been skewed. Trust and confidence have diminished and must be restored.

The intent of this project is to restore, through training the mature adult, the confidence needed to aggressively disciple others. The fifty-plus population is currently growing at phenomenal pace. Statistics currently show that this group is twenty-five percent of the American populace. Mature adults trained to disciple others could be instrumental in bridging the gaps between themselves and future generations.

Summary

The writer grew up spiritually in the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois. Mature adults have significantly contributed to his growth and development at Antioch as well as other churches in the Chicago area. Considering the significant impact these individuals have had on his life, he wanted to share those experiences with others, teaching them to disciple those in their circle of influence. We all stand on the shoulders of others. A gift that the African culture gave to the world is a concept called *ubuntu* which means I am because you are and because you are I am. This relational connection within one's network of family, friends and associates can be instrumental in discipling their *oikos*. *Oikos* is the Greek word for household and includes one's sphere of influence.

Studies have shown that 75 to 90% of new conversions were drawn by family and friends. If the majority of believers today would trace their spiritual roots, more than likely most would have been influenced by their natural web of relationships.

Considering the fact that 25% of the American populace is over fifty, it is this writer's opinion that it is imperative to prepare this group for the responsibility of continuing and improving this trend.

The Bible shares with us in the tenth chapter of Acts, a story of Peter going to Cornelius's house. When Peter arrived Cornelius had called together his relatives and close friends. The Bible records that when Peter finished sharing the gospel, the entire household of Cornelius responded. Bible knowledge is important, but knowledge for knowledge sake, without life application is of little value. The Bible emphasizes repeatedly the importance of putting into practice what we have read and heard. If a member of your *oikos* is the most influential means of bringing people to faith, it must be done through love and caring.

Mature adults love to share their faith in simple relational ways. Most enjoy chatting with friends and family. As opportunities arise, if equipped with the word of God, they are more willing to share their faith in a simple, warm, and personal way. This confidence can only come through study and preparation. Currently most discipleship programs are not age specific. The development of this program was directed towards believers fifty years of age and older for two reasons. First of all, this group represents a large part of the American population and is the most influential. Secondly, the older adults that discipled the writer had more influence on him and his peers than any other persons. Where much has been written about concepts and models of ministry, this project shows that to equip or properly prepare the mature disciple in a simplistic way is much more effective and practical. The simplicity of the word of God with the practical

life experiences of the mature adult can significantly impact their family and ministry in a very powerful way.

Robert Coleman's, book *The Master Plan of Evangelism*⁹³ is considered a classic and provides the biblical mandate for Discipling as done by Jesus. In his book he identifies eight principles of discipleship, they are: selection, association, consecration, impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision and reproduction. Eye-witness reports of his methods and models have been recorded for us follow as we follow Christ, the one who was focused and clearly understood his purpose.

Bill Hull, another respected authority of Discipling and the writer of several books on discipleship, recognizes six traits of an disciple utilizing the biblical support of the fifteenth chapter of John, he says: a disciple remains in Christ, a disciple is obedient, a disciple bears fruit, a disciple glorifies God, a disciple has joy, and a disciple loves as Christ loves.

In his book, *Real Faith for Real Life*⁹⁴, Michael Foss, one of the newest authorities on discipleship; discusses what he called the six marks of discipleship. He says they are: daily prayer, weekly worship, daily bible reading, serving in and beyond the congregation, nurturing relationships and giving.

While examining the above mentioned experts and reviewing the proven biblical foundations, concepts and others materials on discipleship; the writers' aim for the mature adult was to focus the project participants attention on who God is and who we are in relation to his creative power. Our premise was, by understanding God's power, his presence, his sovereignty helps the mature disciple understand themselves and become

⁹³ Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*.

⁹⁴ Foss. *Real Faith for Real Life*.

better able to relate to God and to share with others. The classes designed were: how to have discipler's heart, we have to be in a right relationship with God and ourselves before we can even begin to establish relationships with others. Secondly we explored the significance of understanding the assurance that believers have in salvation. Once we secure in our relationship through Jesus Christ we can easily include that reality in our story. Thirdly we explored the omni powers of God in the lesson A Mighty God, nothing we can do, and no place we can go that God is not already there.

Without understanding the significance of the Bible in our faith relationship with God and using His Word as a means of communication and inspiration; the fourth lesson focused on the Word of God. Finally our relationship with the Savior is enhanced by our constant communication with him. We entitled that lesson renewed strength. Exploring the concept that repetition aids learning and the repetitive nature of our communication and dialogue with the Father enhances our relationship with him while being refreshed by His Word. After a review of the lessons developed for these initial sessions, another lesson was required it was entitled the Holy Spirit and you. We have to have a relationship with the comforter whom the Father has sent to guide and assist us. It is through these processes that the mature adult becomes empowered to disciple others.

Conclusion

The mandate for discipleship was established by Jesus. As believers in him our direction is clear. The writer's motivation for this project was conceived by his perception of how the African American church handles aging. It would appear that at some point in the mature adult's life they abandon their role and responsibilities as

disciples. Mature adults appear to want to coast through those wisdom years as, perhaps critics, at worst or observers, at best. Yet, God does not expect us to retire from our role as disciples. It is a lifelong assignment and as long as there's still breath, then there's still a purpose and a call for us to be disciples.

In conclusion the implementation of the new classes followed by an analysis of these revised presentations would be necessary before the writer could confirm its effectiveness. The foundation is solid; the premise is sincere however the application must be run for reliability and impact before this project can be added to the genre of literature for discipleship.

APPENDIX A
PROJECT DEFINITIONS

A Relational Look at Your *Oikos*:
A Curriculum for Discipling the Mature Adult

Project Definitions

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP): AARP is the leading nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization for people age fifty years old and over in the United States.

Disciple: A learner or student, follower of a teacher, follower of Christ.

Elders: For this specific project, elder is being defined as an adult age fifty and above.

Gye Nyame (pronounced (jeh-N-yah-mee): African word and symbol for except God, the omnipotence and the omnipresence of God

Mature: For this specific project, mature is being defined as an adult age fifty and above.

Oikos: a person's family, friends or associates; Greek word for household, one's sphere of influence.

Ubuntu (pronounced oo-BOON-too), is a sub-Saharan African ethic or ideology focusing on people's allegiances and relations with each other. "I am because we are."

APPENDIX B
PROJECT LESSONS

Lesson One A Discippler's Heart

I. Objectives

Students will:

- Recognize the characteristics of a discipler's heart
- Identify the steps involved in reaching the goal of being content
- Understand the rationale for discipleship
- Understand that discipleship begins at home

II. Introduction to lesson

1. How to plant a seed of contentment in the heart of a Discippler

Phil. 4:7 Peace

Phil. 4:8 Think

Phil. 4:9 Do

Phil. 4:10 Rejoice

Phil. 4:11 Be content

2. Tactical maneuvers to witness

3. Teacher formulate questions using life problems

4. Student discuss answers using life application of God's word

III. Scripture Background

Phil. 4:7-11

⁷And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. ⁹Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

¹⁰But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. ¹¹Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

John 1:39-41

³⁹He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

IV. Case Study Presentation/Lesson Presentation

V. Lesson Activity

Distribute questions to students. Time limit – talking allowed. Students present answers to group

VI. Action Proposal

1. What do I do at my age to obtain a discipler's heart?
2. Compose a collective class list of individuals to disciple.
3. Survey

VII. Prayer of Commitment

Individual sentence prayers

Lesson Two Blessed Assurance

I. Objectives

Students will:

- Recollect and share the story of the beginning of their spiritual journeys
- Be assured of their salvation
- Identify tactics for assuring the salvation of others

II. Scripture Background

John 1:12, 3:16, 10:10, 14:6

^{3:16}For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

^{14:6}Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23

^{3:23}For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

^{5:8}But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

^{6:23}For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

III. Case Study/Lesson Presentation

IV. Lesson Activity

1. Share personal salvation stories
2. Memorize “confidence” scripture

1 John 5:11-13 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

V. Action Proposal

1. How can I help someone else be assured of their salvation at my age?
2. Who can I reach?

Refer to “Future Disciples” list.

Share success stories based on last week’s lesson.

VI. Prayer of Commitment

Lesson Three A Mighty God

I. Objectives

Students will:

- Understand the Omni attributes of God
- Identify ways to explain this to others
- Introduce the West African *Gye Nyame* “except God”

II. Introduction to lesson

The awesome power of God is omniscience, omnipotent, and omnipresence.

This provides for believers:

1. Peaceful Confidence
2. Peaceful Compassion
3. Peaceful Completion

III. Scripture Background

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Job 38:4

Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?

Philippians 2:10 - 11

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; ¹¹ And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

IV. Case Study

West African symbol the *Gye Nyame*

IV. Lesson Activity

Game: Except God and The power of name of Jesus

V. Action Proposal

1. How have I experience God's power in my life?
2. How would I relate that experience to a family member?

VI. Prayer of Commitment

Lesson Four The Word of God

I. Objectives

Students will:

- Develop a basic understanding of the origin of the Bible
- Understand the power of God's Word
- Understand the uniqueness of the Bible
- How to apply the Word of God

II. Introduction to lesson

Understand that the Bible provides no contradiction. It is fulfilled; there is never been a lack of evidence just a lack of faith.

III. Scripture Background

2 Timothy 2:15

¹⁶ All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Ephesians 6:16-17

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Psalms 119:11

¹¹ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Matthew 1:22

²² Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

IV. Case Study

The rescue of billionaire Howard Hughes

V. Lesson Activity

Fast track reading plans was distributed and explained. This provides an overview of the Bible in 100 readings.

VI. Action Proposal

1. Status on “Future Disciples” list

VII. Prayer of Commitment

Lesson Five Renewed Strength

I. Objectives

Students will:

- Identify the five parts of prayer
- Understand how to pray secretly, sincerely and specifically
- Understand the importance of daily devotion
- Understand the Biblical expression of meditation

II. Introduction to lesson

The prayers of Jesus

III. Scripture Background

Mark 1:35

³⁵ And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Matthew 6:5-13

⁵ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. ⁶ But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. ⁷ But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. ⁸ Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. ¹⁰ Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

IV. Case Study

This emphasizes the correlation of skill development through repetition and practice. Using for examples; Dwayne Wade, Miami Heat and Chef Nairobi Miller of Antioch.

V. Lesson Activity

The Acts of prayer

VI. Action Proposal

Offering prayers of intercession for classmates

VII. Prayer of Commitment

Lesson Six The Holy Spirit and You

I. Objectives

Students will:

- Understand the Trinity
- Understand the Person of the Holy Spirit
- Develop the confidence to share your story
- Realize that you are not alone

II. Introduction to lesson

Understanding the Comforter; the Holy Spirit

III. Scripture Background

Acts 1:4 -5,8

⁴ And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. ⁵ For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

⁸ But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

John 14: 18-26

¹⁸ I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. ¹⁹ Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. ²⁰ At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. ²¹ He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. ²² Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? ²³ Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. ²⁴ He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

²⁵ These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you. ²⁶But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

IV. Case Study

Power outage
Powerful winds, hurricane Katrina
Powerless beings

V. Lesson Activity

Review of previous lessons

VI. Action Proposal

1. Sharing your story while understanding where your strength comes from.

VII. Prayer of Commitment

APPENDIX C
PROJECT SURVEYS

A Relational Look at Your *Oikos*:
 A Curriculum for Discipling the Mature Adult
 Doctoral Candidate Rev. Karl D. Miller
 United Theological Seminary
 Dayton, Ohio

PRECLASS SURVEY

1. How long have you been a Christian? _____

2. How do you rank the following? Use 1-6 in order of importance to you.

___ Legacy

___ Mortality

___ Finance

___ Family

___ Career

___ Education

3. What responsibilities do you believe elders have in a family? _____

4. Do you have an un-churched family member? _____

5. How important is sharing the gospel to you? _____

6. Are you comfortable in sharing the gospel? Explain. _____

7. How would you define discipleship? _____

8. Do you think discipleship is important to the mature adult? Explain. _____

9. What do you know about God's assurance of salvation? _____

10. How do you plant a seed of commitment in the heart of a Disciple? _____

11. Choose the answer or answers you feel are correct.

When a person becomes a Christian . . .

- ☐ Only those sins that he confesses are forgiven.
- ☐ All of his/her sins in the past are forgiven, but not those in the future.
- ☐ He/she becomes perfect and unable to ever sin again.
- ☐ All of our sins past, present and future are forgiven.

12. How important is communication with God to the mature Disciple? Explain. _____

A Relational Look at Your *Oikos*:
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 Dayton, Ohio

POSTCLASS SURVEY

1. How long have you been a Christian? _____ years

2. How do you rank the following? Use 1-6 in order of importance to you. With 1 being the highest and 6 the lowest.
 - ___ Legacy
 - ___ Mortality
 - ___ Finance
 - ___ Family
 - ___ Career
 - ___ Education

3. What are the two most important responsibilities do you believe elders have in a family?
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____

4. Do you have an un-churched family member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. How important is sharing the gospel to you?
 - ☐ Very important
 - ☐ Somewhat important
 - ☐ Not important

6. Are you comfortable in sharing the gospel? Explain.

- ☐ Very comfortable
- ☐ Somewhat comfortable
- ☐ Not comfortable

7. How would you define discipleship? _____

8. How important do you think discipleship is to the mature adult?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not important

9. What do you know about God's assurance of salvation based on what we learned in class? _____

10. How do you plant a seed of contentment in the heart of a Disciple based on what we learned in class? _____

11. Choose the answer or answers you feel are correct.

When a person becomes a Christian...

- ☐ Only those sins that he confesses are forgiven.
- ☐ All of his/her sins in the past are forgiven, but not those in the future.
- ☐ He/she becomes perfect and unable to ever sin again.
- ☐ All of our sins past, present and future are forgiven.

12. How important is communication with God to the mature Discipler?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not important

APPENDIX D
CLASS EVALUATION

A Relational Look at Your *Oikos*:
A Curriculum for Discipling the Mature Adult

CLASS EVALUATION

1. Were the classes helpful?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat
2. Was the presenter prepared to teach the class?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat
3. Was the material understandable and helpful?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat
4. Did the presenter answer questions raised during the classes with clarity?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat
5. Did the presenter allow the participants a chance to express their thoughts and opinions regarding the material and subject matter?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat
6. Do you understand the discipleship process?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat

7. After taking these classes do you feel more comfortable discipling your *oikos*?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat
8. After taking these classes, do you understand the discipleship process?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Somewhat
9. Will you begin to disciple others for Christ now that the sessions are completed?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Maybe
10. Would you recommend these classes to other mature adults?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Maybe

[illegible]

APPENDIX E
CLASS DEMOGRAPHICS

A Relational Look at Your *Oikos*:
A Curriculum for Discipling the Mature Adult
Doctoral Candidate Rev. Karl D. Miller
United Theological Seminary
Dayton, Ohio

Class Demographics

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your gender?
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female
3. What is your marital status?
 - ☐ Married
 - ☐ Single
 - ☐ Divorced
 - ☐ Widow/Widower
 - ☐ Separated
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - ☐ Elementary School
 - ☐ High School
 - ☐ Some college or technical training
 - ☐ Associates Degree (2 year program)
 - ☐ Bachelor's Degree (4/5 year program)
 - ☐ Master's Degree
 - ☐ Doctorate

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